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THE PROBLEM OF JESUS

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THE problem of Jesus, which by its very nature must always remain of present concern, seems of late to have stirred a keener interest than for many years past. Never have the publications relating to Jesus and to the problem of the origins of Christianity been so abundant as to-day, and more than ever before do men crave an exact idea of the true story of Jesus and the conditions in which Christianity had its origin.

On the other hand, there has never been a time in which opinion on this fundamental question has shown less of agreement. I am not thinking primarily of the religious and theological differences which must necessarily characterize the estimates of Jesus and of the part he has played in religion. I am referring only to the historical problem, and it is not too much to say that never did this seem farther from receiving a solution which could command general assent. Not only on details of interpretation, but on the most essential aspects of the question and on the methods to be pursued in studying it, agreement is wholly lacking. Indeed, the present state of the matter might well be described as a complete disorganization of opinion. In one direction we see an extraordinary crop of theories elaborated with the aid of a fantastic imagination rather than by strict historical research, in another a series of well-nigh desperate attempts to remove the problem of Jesus from the shifting and, it may be, untrustworthy ground of history, and to transfer it to the calmer and more secure field of religious experience and the life of the spirit.

It seems worth while, after giving some account of this disorganization, to try to understand the cause of it, and especially to inquire whether, as some think, it is the logical outcome of

an ill-judged undertaking (the attempt, namely, to test by the methods of history a problem that is only partly, if at all, an historical one), or whether, on the other hand, we are only passing through a crisis, a situation in criticism which may well be temporary and have no fatal result, and out of which we can come with success if we apply to the problem its own proper methods.

The problem of Jesus is complex, and presents three principal aspects. First, the historical problem strictly so called raises such questions as these: What was Jesus, a real person or a mythical being? What was his career, the story of his life? In what did his teaching consist? What was its origin? To what extent was it determined by previous currents of thought and how far was it an original creation? This is what one may call the problem of the Life of Jesus. Another problem, perhaps in part (but certainly only in part) of the same nature as the first, is that of the influence of the person and work of Jesus (his work, that is, in the most general sense of the term) in the genesis and development of Christianity. Here, beside the historical factor, another enters, of a spiritual nature, namely the life of Christ in the souls of believers. Finally, in the third place, the problem of Christ has a religious aspect. Here we have to do not with judgments of fact but with judgments of value, and the questions raised must be answered, not by means of analysis and interpretation of texts, but through an inner attitude.

These three problems, or at least the historical problem and the religious problem, are in reality essentially related one to another; and all the more because of the natural tendency, if not exactly to solve the one by means of the other, at least to introduce, for the solution of the one, considerations which are really appropriate only for the other. In practice it is impossible to hold the religious problem in suspense until the historical problem has been given a satisfactory solution; but logically the historical problem precedes the religious one, and consequently, in the unavoidable study of the history, judgments of value on the person and work of Jesus must not be allowed to intervene.

Accordingly it is legitimate, or rather it is a sound method, to neglect for the time being the religious problem (which is by no

means to say that it does not exist or is unimportant) in order to view the question of Jesus solely in its historical aspect. The diversity of opinion here may be illustrated by citing some representative works that have appeared within the last ten years.

To begin with the extreme theories, let us recall the mythical systems which have flourished anew in recent years.¹ They were not born yesterday. As early as the eighteenth century, we hear from Voltaire that certain disciples of Lord Bolingbroke professed such theories. With Volney and Dupuis they had some vogue in France, and it is said that Napoleon was for a time attracted by them; but they met their ruin for long years to come through a slender pamphlet by Pérèz, who framed, by the methods of Dupuis, a theory that Napoleon himself was a myth. In the middle of the nineteenth century, with Bruno Bauer, they reappeared in Germany, but attained little influence. They were developed by the radical Dutch school, but still without gaining adherents beyond a limited circle. Twenty years ago W. B. Smith, J. M. Robertson, and especially Arthur Drews, succeeded in bringing them before the general public, but in the character of anti-christian polemic rather than of scientific theory. In many respects very different from these theories is that advanced by P.-L. Couchoud² in 1924. He regards the myth of Christ as the sociological explanation of Christianity, and has presented his view so ably as to win considerable support. Of course there has been no lack of opposition. While a fair number from outside the ranks of professional scholars have declared themselves convinced, the whole body of recognized experts, the life-long students of the history of Christian origins, have pronounced against him, sometimes in very severe language.

With Couchoud we may perhaps compare E. Dujardin and his book entitled "Le Dieu Jésus."³ I say 'perhaps,' not only

¹ On the history of the mythical theories, see my book, *Jésus de Nazareth, mythe ou histoire?* Paris, 1925, pp. 9-34 (pp. 11-31 of the English translation); A. Drews, *Die Leugnung der Geschichtlichkeit Jesu in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Karlsruhe, 1926.

² Paul-Louis Couchoud, *Le Mystère de Jésus*, Paris, 1924.

³ Édouard Dujardin, *Le Dieu Jésus: essai sur les origines et la formation de la légende évangélique*, Paris, 1927.

because Dujardin claims that his theory of the spiritually historic character of Jesus is not a purely mythical theory, but because he has not given it a complete and consistent development. Thus he holds that the story of Jesus, especially the passion, is only the reflection of the ritual of an ancient mystery, the origins of which are lost in prehistoric darkness; but he explains that the reason why this myth took on new life in the first century of our era is that in the year 27 Jesus offered himself as a voluntary victim for the bloody sacrifice which the ancient mystery-ritual demanded. The book presents the strange combination of a theory inspired by the sociological postulate and a vague feeling that the gospel tradition corresponds to a real event. In this respect it is a curious instance of the complexity of the mutually contradictory influences that play upon the mind of one who attacks the problem of Jesus without adequate technical preparation.

According to Isidore Lévy,⁴ the question raised by Couchoud is not so important as has generally been supposed. After all, he asks, what difference does it make whether Jesus existed or not, so long as we know the origin of the materials which make up his history? He thinks that the story was fashioned out of two elements, one proceeding from the Old Testament, while the other and far more important element was nothing but an assemblage of themes borrowed from the legend of Pythagoras, which came into Palestine by way of Egypt and Alexandrian Jewry.

Although agreeing with the mythologists in denying any validity to the gospel tradition, Daniel Massé⁵ refuses to accept their explanation of its origin. He believes that the picture of Jesus preserved by the church is the result of a huge piece of deliberate fraud. The true Jesus had nothing in common with the prophet of the Beatitudes, with him who proclaimed that his kingdom was not of this world and taught men that they

⁴ Isidore Lévy, *La Légende de Pythagore de Grèce en Palestine*, Paris, 1927; *Recherches sur les sources de la légende de Pythagore*, Paris, 1926. For a discussion of Lévy's theory, see my article, 'Les théories de M. Isidore Lévy sur l'influence de la légende de Pythagore,' *Revue de philologie, de littérature et d'histoire ancienne*, 1928, pp. 241-270.

⁵ Daniel Massé, *L'énigme de Jésus Christ*, Paris, [1926].

should render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's. The church carefully suppressed all the texts that would have contradicted the fiction to which it wished to subject humanity. But apparently the church was not able to prevent Massé from discovering that Jesus was, in fact, the son of that Judas the Galilean, native of Gamala in Gaulanitis, who at the time of the census under Quirinius organized an insurrection against Rome. Jesus likewise was the leader of an armed band who entered into conflict with Rome and were finally put down, not without some trouble, by Pilate. I ought to add that Massé appears to have no followers, and that his book, of which he began the publication three years ago, remains uncompleted.

I hesitate to mention, in juxtaposition with a self-taught critic like Massé, whose acquaintance with the subject is superficial and utterly inadequate, a writer like Robert Eisler, who is without doubt one of the most prodigiously learned men of our time. In a work of imposing dimensions just completed,⁶ he maintains that the movement represented by Jesus, like that inaugurated by John the Baptist before him and the work of his disciples after him, was only an incident in the age-long struggle of the Jewish people to throw off the yoke of Rome, and that in reality there was no radical difference between the group represented by the 'brigand' Hezekias executed by Herod the Great,⁷ Judas the Galilean, Theudas,⁸ and the arch-brigand (ἀρχιληστής) Eleazar whom Felix took prisoner and sent to Rome after crucifying his accomplices⁹ — these on the one hand, and on the other, John the Baptist, Jesus, John the son of Zebedee, Simon Barjonah, and the Apostle Paul.¹⁰ This whole theory rests on the doubtful evidence of certain passages found only in the

⁶ Robert Eisler, *ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΟΤ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣΑΣ*: Die messianische Unabhängigkeit vom Auftreten Johannis des Täufer's bis zum Untergang Jakob des Gerechten, nach der neuerschlossenen Eroberung von Jerusalem des Flavius Josephus und den urchristlichen Quellen, Heidelberg, 1928-29.

⁷ Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae* xiv. 9, 2 (§§ 159 ff.); *De Bello Judaico* ii. 10, 5 (§§ 204 ff.).

⁸ His attempts at rebellion are alluded to in Acts 5, 36-37.

⁹ *Ant. Jud.* xx. 8, 5 (§ 161); *Bell. Jud.* ii. 13, 1 (§ 253).

¹⁰ At least for the first part of his career, for Eisler admits that afterwards Paul was inclined to make concessions to the power of Rome.

Slavic version of the Jewish War of Flavius Josephus.¹¹ The vast majority of critics consider these texts to be entirely unauthentic, but Eisler maintains their genuineness except for certain Christian interpolations which he finds it easy to eliminate. He thinks it possible to get support for the testimony of the Slavic version from several other texts, but the highly arbitrary manner in which he treats his texts is hardly such as to inspire confidence. His method is to build hypotheses on conjectures, do away with inconvenient passages as interpolations, and then restore by conjecture what the text must originally have said. With such a method it would require but a modicum of imagination, a faculty with which Eisler is, on the contrary, richly endowed, to construct brilliant and audacious theories; but they will be no more substantial than a house of cards. The fact is that our confidence in the soundness of the gospel tradition would have to be already thoroughly undermined before we could think of substituting for it something so totally different.

The new gospels proposed by Henri Barbusse¹² and Étienne Giran¹³ leave the same impression. These writers too make Jesus the mouthpiece of their own ideas and sentiments. One of them represents him as the prophet of a social revolution with communistic tendencies. The other takes him as the preacher of a truly spiritual religion, the teachings of which were badly corrupted in two ways — first, by a clumsy misunderstanding which caused certain rather simple-minded women to believe that he had risen from the tomb, and thus transformed the Galilean prophet into a resuscitated god,¹⁴ and secondly, by the

¹¹ These texts have been made accessible to western scholars by A. Berendts in *Die Zeugnisse vom Christentum im slavischen De Bello Judaico des Josephus* (Texte und Untersuchungen, neue Folge, XIV, 4), Leipzig, 1906.

¹² H. Barbusse, *Jésus*, Paris, [1927]; cf. *Les Judas de Jésus*, Paris, [1927].

¹³ Étienne Giran, *Le Jardin plein de sources*. Vol. I. *L'Évangile retrouvé*, Paris, 1927.

¹⁴ According to Giran, Joseph of Arimathea, in order to get authority from Pilate for burying the body of Jesus, had to engage not to leave it in his tomb but to remove it to an unknown spot as soon as the sabbath was over. When the women came early in the morning of the third day, they found the sepulchre open and empty, because the gardener of Joseph of Arimathea had not yet had time to put things in order after carrying out the transfer of the body. In reproaching the women for seeking the living among the dead, he did not mean that Jesus had returned to life, but only that his soul remained alive in spite of death. The misunderstanding of his words gave rise to the legend of the resurrection.

intervention of a man (the Apostle Paul) who, having no acquaintance with Jesus and no information about him, substituted for the real prophet the figure of a kind of god fabricated out of Old Testament texts.

Perhaps the most extraordinary thing about works of this sort is the way in which their authors presume to put them forth without a word of justification by exegesis or criticism. For them, apparently, nothing concerning Jesus seems sufficiently certain to stand in the way of any theory, no matter how fantastic or incredible it may be. One would think that historical scholars had completely abandoned the field of the life of Jesus, when fancy and imagination assume such sovereignty in it; and indeed the most distinguishing symptom of the present state of the problem of Jesus is the bankruptcy of the historians.

Let us turn now to the Catholic theologians. If there is anywhere in the world a group of men among whom we should expect to find a thoroughly substantial conception of the story of Jesus, it is here. Very true, lives of Jesus are still written in the Catholic church, some brief and popular, like that by Fernand Laudet,¹⁵ others more full and accompanied by learned apparatus replete with archaeological, geographical, historical, and philological material by no means without value, such as that of the Abbé Fillion.¹⁶ But these works have none of the savor of their own time. Purposely or not, they take no account of the present state of the problems. They are but survivals, or anachronisms, which could have been written in the nineteenth century, or the eighteenth, just as well as in the twentieth.

Two works, however, are at hand, which it would be unjust to include with these books that aim to edify rather than to instruct or to make advance in knowledge. They are by two of the regular clergy, one from the Society of Jesus, the late Father Léonce de Grandmaison,¹⁷ the other from the Preaching Friars, Father Marie-Joseph Lagrange,¹⁸ of the biblical and

¹⁵ Fernand Laudet, *Histoire populaire de Jésus*, Tours, 1924.

¹⁶ Fillion, *Vie de Notre Seigneur Jésus Christ: étude historique, critique, et apolo-gétique*, 3 vols., Paris, 1922.

¹⁷ Léonce de Grandmaison, *Jésus Christ, sa personne, son message, ses preuves*, 2 vols., Paris, 1928. The work was finished when the author died in 1927. His colleagues Fathers Lebreton and Huby carried it through the press.

¹⁸ M.-J. Lagrange, *L'Évangile de Jésus Christ*, Paris, 1928.

archaeological school in Jerusalem. Neither of these works comes unheralded. They are the crowning achievements of laborious careers. Both the authors have followed attentively the work of non-catholic criticism in France as well as abroad. They have explored the wide domain of the history of religions and they know at first hand the religious currents prevailing in the world where Christianity was born and developed. Each of the books has its own distinctive character; what they have in common is all the more significant.

Father de Grandmaison is primarily a theologian. He looks at the problems of history from the point of view of a definite theological belief, and lays it down as a principle that only by that doctrine is the solution of the historical problem to be gained. He does not expect the analysis of facts to reveal to him the action of God in history, especially in the history of Christianity and its establishment, but on the contrary his prior knowledge of God's thought, gained through the church, reveals to him the meaning of the history. His purpose is to present the traditional Catholic solution of the problem of Jesus, and by confronting with this the theories of the critics to display the Catholic doctrine emerging victorious from the test, unshaken by the historical arguments current since the late eighteenth century. From such a work no great historical results are to be expected but only the negative service of the refutation of errors or the correction of hasty conclusions.¹⁹ It is an index of the character of de Grandmaison's work that in all of the twelve hundred pages in which he discusses the various aspects of the problem of Jesus there is not to be found even the sketch of a life of Jesus. We are not told, for example, how long a period the author assigns to the ministry of Jesus, how he conceives the succession of facts in his life, the connection between the Galilean and the Jerusalem ministry, the circumstances that led to his death. Did the author conceive it useless to make an outline of the life of Jesus or did he deem it impossible? He does not say; but he seems to give color to the views of those many

¹⁹ A good illustration is to be found in the very vigorous pages in which Father de Grandmaison discusses certain theories relating to the influence exerted on Christianity by the hellenistic mysteries.

critics who hold that it is no longer possible to write a life of Jesus.

Father Lagrange is no less submissive a son of the church than Father de Grandmaison. His numerous published works take the fullest account of the decisions of the Biblical Commission, and where the church has pronounced, he finds no longer a problem but only dogmas. However, he sometimes gives the impression of escaping a contradiction to these dogmas only by dint of subtlety and dialectic skill. His submission, no less sincere than that of Father de Grandmaison, is perhaps less spontaneous. The fact is that Father Lagrange has in him the making of a true historian. He has the right intelligence. All the more significant is it that in this latest work, "*L'Évangile de Jésus Christ*," he, like Father de Grandmaison, refrains from sketching a life of Jesus; but while the Jesuit merely omits, the Dominican explains the reasons for his procedure. "The four gospels," he says, "are not sufficient for writing a history of Jesus as a man of to-day would write a history of Augustus Caesar," and again, "[they] are the only life of Jesus Christ that can be written. Our task is only to understand them."²⁰

These two books²¹ have appeared too recently for us to judge whether they will elicit a response from within the Catholic church. Any such could only be indirect, for both the books appeared with the approbation of the ecclesiastical censors. We may note, however, that in reviewing the works of Fathers de Grandmaison and Lagrange in "*Le Correspondant*" for December 25, 1928, the late Monsignor Batiffol confined himself to saying that Father Lagrange had gone rather far in his assertions, and that for his part he believed it possible to construct a life of Jesus by taking the story in Mark as a basis, adding the data common to Matthew and Luke, and then supplementing

²⁰ Lagrange, p. vi.

²¹ With the works of de Grandmaison and Lagrange may be compared the sermons of Father Pinard de la Boullaye, at Notre Dame de Paris. But in the course for Lent 1929, entitled *Jésus et l'histoire*, Father Pinard still treats only a very limited problem, that of the historical existence of Jesus. He gives us to understand that this is only an introduction, and that we must wait until the work is further advanced before passing judgment on it. So far, however, he does not seem likely to separate the historical from the theological and religious problem any more than is the case with de Grandmaison and Lagrange.



this by what is peculiar to Matthew, Luke, and John. But to suggest what can be done is not to do it, and to declare a problem not insoluble is not the same thing as to offer a solution.

The plan thus somewhat vaguely suggested by Batiffol is, in effect, allowing for the necessary differences due to the Catholic point of view, the same as that followed in the many *Lives of Jesus* that saw the light between 1863 and the beginning of the twentieth century; but Batiffol brings it forward after it has long been abandoned by independent critics.

Externally considered, independent criticism, since the end of the nineteenth century, has shown signs of lassitude. It has restricted itself more and more to studies of detail, as if it no longer had sufficient self-confidence to approach the larger general questions. The opening of the twentieth century saw the end of the period of *Lives of Jesus* that began in 1863 with Renan. Not only is the life of Jesus no longer written, but, a still graver symptom, we are told that it is impossible to write one.

In 1906, in an epoch-making book, Albert Schweitzer declared that the net result of the labor devoted to the life of Jesus in the nineteenth century was bankruptcy. In his view every *Life of Jesus* encounters insoluble antinomies, and from this he draws the conclusion that the historical method is incapable of grasping the real Jesus. "At the very moment," he writes, "when we come closer to the Jesus of history than ever before and stretch out our hand to grasp him so as to bring him into our own time, we are forced to draw back and to accept the paradoxical saying: 'Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.'" And he declares that to attain to the eternal Jesus we must give up the Jesus of history.²² Yet there is evidently some inconsistency here, for Schweitzer himself does not give up trying to form an idea of what Jesus was in history. What he does is to give up the slow and careful processes of historical analysis and take recourse to a method, bold to the point of temerity, which he calls "historical experimentation." Starting with the idea of "consistent eschatology," he strives to conceive of the life of

²² A. Schweitzer, *Von Reimarus zu Wrede: eine Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung*, Tübingen, 1906, p. 399. The second edition was published in 1913.

Jesus in such a way as might account for the genesis of Christianity.²³

Schweitzer's state of mind is that of the theologians of his own, and still more of a slightly later, generation. One proof of this, out of many that could be cited, is the appearance in the years following the War of a new school of gospel criticism bearing the not very clear or very felicitous name of 'form- und traditionsgeschichtliche Schule.'²⁴ This school makes it an article of its creed that a life of Jesus is impossible, but it arrives at this conclusion, not, like Schweitzer, by studying the work accomplished in the nineteenth century, but by analyzing the problem itself and the materials available for its solution. The new school is perhaps not so original as it claims. Some of its theses — and not the least important of them — were expressly formulated by Reuss more than half a century ago. But that is not important; the significance of the 'formgeschichtliche Schule' is all the greater if it has merely brought into the open the results of a long period of critical labor.

The first thesis formulated by the new school is that the outline of narrative common to the gospels is an artificial construction which implies no real and organic relation between the various episodes that fill it. Our sole materials are isolated traditions, fragmentary reports. The second thesis concerns the character of the several traditions and reports. These are not historical documents in the strict sense of the term. They were neither written nor preserved in order to keep alive the memory of the Jesus who lived and taught in Galilee and Judaea and died at Jerusalem. They are religious documents; they express the faith of the milieu in which they first saw the light, and their function was to maintain and propagate that faith by interpreting to the piety of the primitive church what Jesus was. In addition to these two theses, a third affirms that, considered as to their form, the materials constituting the gospel tradition

²³ Das Messianitäts- und Leidensgeheimnis: eine Skizze des Lebens Jesu, Tübingen, 1902. See also the same writer's *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung*, 2nd ed., pp. 190-443.

²⁴ On this school see my article, 'Une nouvelle école critique évangélique: la form- und traditionsgeschichtliche Schule,' *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, XCIV, 1926, pp. 114-160.

are to be grouped under a number of types corresponding to the various functions of the primitive church — preaching, instruction, apology, missionary work. Elaborated with an eye to the purpose for which they were intended, the traditions are documents of the highest importance for the history of the primitive church, but not documents concerning Jesus.

The conclusions which the school draws from these essential theses are expressed in two sentences of R. Bultmann, one of their leaders: "In my opinion, what we can know of the life and personality of Jesus is as good as nothing,"²⁵ and again, "We can no longer know the character of Jesus, his personality, or his life. . . . Not a single one of his sayings can be shown to be authentic."²⁶

In a recent study, another representative of the school, G. Bertram, explains why he can reconcile himself to a complete agnosticism in regard to Jesus. He says: "Because history tends to introduce into the facts a necessary nexus, it presupposes the intervention of an essentially subjective, philosophical conception which acts as a rationalizing element although it has no rational foundation. History, then, is not a way of apprehending reality — rather it tends to substitute for reality an arbitrary construction. The reality is that in Jesus is presented a Word, full of authority, to which we must say 'yes' or 'no,' which we must recognize as the bearer of a divine message or else dismiss as meaningless. This dilemma is not resolved with texts, but only by an essentially irrational act in which the whole personality is involved. How certain persons answered 'yes' to the claims of this person, and what resulted from this, that is to say, how the church came into existence and developed — that can be the object of historical inquiry and knowledge, but the person of Jesus itself eludes history."²⁷

This historical agnosticism is not the acceptance of a state of facts resulting from insufficient documentation. It is an affirmation of principle derived from the nature of historical knowl-

²⁵ R. Bultmann, *Jesus*, Berlin, [1926], p. 12.

²⁶ R. Bultmann, *Die Erforschung der synoptischen Evangelien*, Giessen, 1925, p. 33.

²⁷ G. Bertram, *Neues Testament und historische Methode*, Tübingen, 1928.

edge itself and from the character of the person of Jesus. Does it form the necessary and logical issue of the development of criticism? Must criticism, reaching its natural limit, end in a *non liquet*, and frankly admit that the problem of Jesus henceforth stands on other than historical ground? Or is it not due, this agnosticism, to a confusion of the historical problem with the religious problem of Jesus, so that a requisition has been made upon history for a greater degree of certainty than in its nature history can give — a degree of certainty which properly belongs only to religious intuition and to faith? This dilemma must at any rate be faced, for in view of the formulas of the new school the question arises, not only whether an historical knowledge of Jesus is possible, but, more inclusively, what history at all, especially what ancient history, is possible. Is the condition anything more than a temporary discouragement, the symptom — perhaps morbid — of a crisis through which criticism is passing and from which it can recover and as to which we can already see the means by which it will recover? I believe that the latter is the case, and I will now explain why I think so.

Strange as it may seem, the problem of Jesus is of comparatively recent origin. First stated scarcely more than a century and a half ago, much more recently properly understood as a question of history, even to-day it is not always put in the right terms. Neither in antiquity nor in the Middle Ages nor at the time of the Reformation nor in the following century could there be a problem of Jesus. The four gospels were supposed to give a history of Jesus perfect in every detail and free from any substantial inconsistency. The divergences were thought to be only apparent, and to involve only questions of order. An order of events was sought — and often worked out with extreme ingenuity — which should allow the substance of all four gospels to be incorporated in a single account without sacrificing the peculiar features of any portion and without changing the sequence of any gospel. The question was not whether such an arrangement was possible, but only what it actually was. This was the period of 'harmonistic.'

The subtleties and extreme complexity of the systems then elaborated led, in the eighteenth century, to the rise of criticism,

which asked whether the four gospels really were absolute and infallible documents, or whether it was not proper to ascribe to the writers themselves something at least of their manner of presenting and connecting the reports. No one proposed to make a clean sweep of tradition and to proceed, as in other problems of history, by trying to reconstruct the life of Jesus by using the materials elicited from the documents by criticism; what was in mind was something far more modest, merely to retouch the traditional accounts in detail in such a way as to make it easier to harmonize them.

All this was due to several causes. The religious value attributed to the tradition allowed a believing Christian — if he were very bold — to make some adjustments, but it could not be reconciled with a more complete recasting. Upon those who were alien or hostile to the Christian faith, the most elementary prudence imposed the same reserve. Besides, previous research had brought to light some difficulties and inconsistencies in the gospel accounts and some contradictions of detail, but had not suggested any systematic doubt as to their value, or, in a word, had not seriously shaken general confidence in the solidity of the gospel tradition. Thus research was from the beginning directed toward criticism rather than history. Scholars were more concerned with correcting and discussing the tradition than with attempting to reconstruct history. At this time, indeed, no other problem could arise.

No great change was brought about when the advances in research had led to a very different estimate of the gospels as documents from that which had prevailed in the eighteenth century. Even to-day the crisis through which study of the life of Jesus is passing is very largely due to the fact that there has been more interest in showing that things did not happen exactly as the gospels state than in discovering the real course of events. Too often our studies have been more negative than positive.

If the greater part of the earlier study of the life of Jesus consisted in merely making slight corrections of traditional notions, yet there was some criticism, notably the remarks of Voltaire and the fragments of Reimarus published by Lessing, which

showed real promise. That this criticism sprang from intuitions of genius rather than from patient and methodical investigation explains why it had on the whole so limited an influence.

Neither the incisive utterances of Voltaire nor the bold constructions of Reimarus produced any appreciable effect. Until 1835, the year in which Strauss's *Life of Jesus* appeared, the two camps of rationalists and supernaturalists alike strove to reproduce the main lines of the gospel tradition and (much after the fashion of the older harmonistic) to combine the data of the Synoptic Gospels with those of John and then to put upon the events of the life of Jesus an interpretation agreeing with their own doctrines. Purely dogmatic discussions on the miracles, especially the resurrection, denied by the one party and affirmed by the other, occupy a large place in those *Lives of Jesus*, and make them works of theology rather than of history.

About this time, however, a new tendency made its appearance, perhaps more important for the state of mind it evinced than for any books that it produced. It was the spirit that gave rise to those romantic *Lives of Jesus* of which the works of Bahrdt and Venturini are the prototypes and largely the sources. These books were inspired by the feeling that the information furnished by the gospels is not enough for satisfactorily reconstructing the story of Jesus, and must be supplemented by imagination and hypothesis.

But in 1835, with the appearance of Strauss's "*Leben Jesu*," there began what may be called the golden age of *Lives of Jesus*, which lasted into the first decade of the twentieth century. In many respects Strauss was an innovator. He was the first to attack the problem, or even try to attack it, entirely without theological bias. This character he owed to the philosophy of Hegel, which taught him that religion does not rest on facts but on ideas. In his mind, no religious interest was at stake in asking whether a given episode narrated in the gospels is historically true or not. But the impartiality with which Strauss could thus approach both history and religion had its reverse side. The distinction between historical account and mythical tale being of no importance, he was apt to tend, by a process

that is not inexplicable, toward the mythical interpretation. It should be noted, however, that in Strauss's conception of myths he emphasizes their significance as representing a truth, not their character of unreality. Moreover, the mythical conception was suggested to him by an application of the logical development of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The rationalistic and supernaturalistic explanations being opposed and standing as thesis and antithesis, he believed himself able to reconcile them in a superior synthesis, namely the mythical explanation. This introduced a habit of systematization into his work which detracts from its historical value, and is the more dangerous because he operated with an inadequate criticism of the sources. He was the first to state the dilemma: Synoptics or Fourth Gospel? but he did not subject the problem of the literary composition of the gospels to a sufficiently searching analysis, being content to take at second hand the theory then current of Mark as epitomator, just as, in his second *Life of Jesus*, thirty years later, he accepted the theories of the Tübingen school.

After the storm created by the publication of Strauss's "*Leben Jesu*," the critics seemed to feel the need of stopping to take breath, as if they realized that no advance could be made in solving the serious problem now raised without a fresh literary criticism of the documents. Nearly thirty years elapsed before a life of Jesus saw the light which really contributed something new and original. This was Renan's "*Vie de Jésus*," which appeared in 1863. To the period between Strauss (1835) and Renan (1863) belongs a large part of the enormous labor on the gospels which will remain one of the most substantial titles to honor of nineteenth-century theology, and which culminated in the theory of two sources, almost universally accepted at the close of the century and never seriously disputed since.

According to this theory the composition of the Synoptic Gospels rests on two principal documents, one of them narrative — our Gospel of Mark, possibly in a slightly different form from the one we know — and the other didactic — a collection of the sayings of Jesus — sometimes called the '*Logia*,' a term already used at the beginning of the second century by Papias of Hierapolis.

Renan's "Vie de Jésus," itself the most famous of them all, opened the series of great lives of Jesus of the second half of the nineteenth century. It would be tedious to name them all, or even the principal ones. They are works of very diverse character, and present theories that differ in much more than details and that afford examples of every shade of opinion, from one extreme to the other. Yet they have some common traits. They all state the problem in the same way, and all tend so to depict Jesus that he may appear as much like a modern man as possible. Often they make of him the ideal of the religious man as conceived by the author; hence every shade of the theology of the nineteenth century is reflected in these lives. Yet the premises adopted and the method followed are so much the same that one can speak of a consensus of criticism at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. The agreement is on the following points. The gospels, whether the Synoptics alone or the Synoptics supplemented in a more or less arbitrary way by the Fourth Gospel, contain a history of the ministry of Jesus of which the main events, though not without gaps, correspond on the whole to the facts. This makes it possible to distinguish two periods, one of success, at the beginning of his activity in Galilee, the other of failures, in consequence of which Jesus repaired to Judaea in order to renew in a fresh field the attempt that had not succeeded in Galilee, or to go to meet the death which he saw to be inevitable. Many of these lives of Jesus, especially the earlier ones, are disposed to eliminate the eschatological element, in which they see only a form imposed on Jesus by the materialistic Jewish messianist doctrine, which he did not share or soon left behind. The authors of these lives of Jesus were chiefly concerned with making the connections between the different points that they considered established and so creating the sequence without which there can be no history. They were all trying to carry out the program that Timothée Colani had defined in 1856 when he wrote: "The task of modern theology consists in drawing up an account of the life of Jesus in which all the facts shall be related to one another in accordance with the laws of history, an account which shall explain the spiritual

development of the Lord as well as the ineffaceable impression which he left on his disciples and has produced on the whole human race.”²⁸ With this purpose the writers had recourse to psychological interpretation and reconstruction, not without an occasional anachronism or without sometimes forgetting the difference in mode of thinking, reasoning, and feeling between a man of Palestine of the first century and a European of our own time.

It is the fashion to pass severe judgment on the nineteenth-century lives of Jesus, and one cannot fail to see that they are all sadly out of date and that, apart from certain detailed observations, not one of them is of real value to-day. But it would be unjust to deny them all merit and to say that the vogue which they once enjoyed is only to be explained by the blindness of those who read them or by their serviceableness as engines of war in theological and ecclesiastical discussion. Taken as a whole, we must acknowledge that these lives of Jesus were as good as their time permitted. If they have quickly grown antiquated to such a point that Alfred Loisy can refuse to-day to stand by the sketch of the gospel history that he gave in 1909 in the introduction to his commentary on the Synoptic Gospels, the fact is that the study of Christian origins has, in the space of one generation, undergone such a transformation as few branches of knowledge have ever seen in so short a time.

In the first place, the problem of the gospels has entered an entirely new phase. The theory of two sources once admitted, a new question has arisen — that of the composition and sources of the Gospel of Mark itself, that is, the ‘prehistory’ of the gospel literature and the history of the tradition of which the gospels represent only one element. The studies in this field pursued since 1900 have shown that the Gospel of Mark was not originally written all at once but was composed with the aid of various materials, adjusted and organized by the evangelist within an artificial frame.

This conclusion is ruinous to the lives of Jesus of the nine-

²⁸ Timothée Colani, ‘Le Dr. Strauss, un chapitre de l’histoire de la théologie moderne,’ *Revue de théologie et de philosophie chrétienne*, vol. XII, 1856, p. 22.

teenth century, for it brings to the ground the whole structure on which they rest. Since the order in which the different episodes of the gospel story are presented is no longer in any way guaranteed, the attempts to connect them together and by psychological interpretation to introduce into the history of Jesus a continuity that the gospel accounts lack, are deprived of all their value.

Furthermore, studies of Judaism in the time of Jesus have shown that apocalyptic ideas occupied so large a place there that to make Jesus appear as not sharing these ideas, or at most as not much influenced by them, would require strong positive evidence, which, in fact, does not exist. We can no longer think of eliminating eschatology from the thought of Jesus, either by neutralizing it or by spiritualizing it, as the nineteenth century so often tried to do, and so Jesus seems to sink into a more distant past, and to become inaccessible to us.

Under these circumstances it is no wonder that the amount of what is considered historical matter contained in the gospel tradition has been much reduced in the last fifteen or twenty years. What is agreed upon by even the most pronounced opponents of the mythical theories can be put in a single sentence, namely: 'Between the year 25 and the year 30 of our era, a rabbi by the name of Jesus was crucified at Jerusalem by order of Pontius Pilate in consequence of a messianic movement.'

Until the beginning of the present century, the problem of the life of Jesus was merely one aspect of the literary problem of the gospels. By determining the oldest form of the gospel tradition, it was thought, the outline of the life of Jesus would be disclosed. The task imposed a method of critical and literary analysis which becomes unsatisfactory so soon as we find that the materials for an historical reconstruction are all given in a scattered condition. But the new form of the problem has so far brought no corresponding new method, and this is the explanation of the crisis which we have discussed. The crisis will last so long as no new method is produced, for under the traditional literary method, the problem of the life of Jesus is distinctly insoluble. To attack it seriously is like trying to open a lock with a key that does not fit. In order to escape from the

crisis a more apt method must be set to work, the right key must be used.

The new method must be more broadly historical and less exclusively critical than the old one.²⁹ It is not a question of cramping the rights of criticism or abating anything of its legitimate claims, but merely of putting it where it belongs, that is, in the field of analysis, of the examination and classification of the materials. A service must not be asked of it which by its nature it cannot give — the service of organizing the facts and reconstructing the history.

That higher task is proper to history. It requires a flexible and versatile method, one which seeks to understand the internal relations of the facts and in particular strives to see these, as it were, from the inside, by entering into the mind of the actors, and trying by an effort of intelligent sympathy and understanding to live over again their inner experience. No history can really be built from the outside, least of all religious history. That calls for both a knowledge of psychology and a gift of intuition. Of course this does not mean merely ideal and hence unreal constructions; psychology and intuition are not there to invent or to assume the facts, but only to interpret the facts as established by evidence, to understand them and show their relations to one another.

The historian's first task will always be to classify and study the materials. For this there is a valuable rule which seems not to have been used as yet for all that it is worth. It may be expressed as follows: Any statement is probably derived from very ancient tradition, and for practical purposes can be considered authentic, which is inconsistent with the forms in which the most ancient faith of the church is known to us — at least so far as concerns the essential points, such as the resurrection on the third day, the necessity of the redeeming death of Christ and his foreknowledge of this death, and his definite conception and open affirmation of his messiahship. This rule would assure the authenticity of such a declaration as Luke 17, 24–25, where we find the ideas of the suffering, rejection, and revelation of the

²⁹ On this subject see my article, 'Critique et histoire à propos de la Vie de Jésus,' *Cahiers de la Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses*, no. 16, Paris, 1928.

Son of Man, but no mention of his death and resurrection, or such as Matthew 10, 5, which forbids the mission to the heathen and the Samaritans and thus contradicts the oldest missionary practice of the church. The texts and statements recognized by this process to be authentic become touchstones by which to test other elements of the tradition, centres of crystallization as it were, about which the solid materials contained in the tradition organize themselves.

However perfect the art of criticism may become, and however exact its results, all that it can produce under the most favorable conditions is a group of ascertained facts about the words of Jesus or the events of his life, merely set side by side, not made into an organic whole and not even arranged chronologically. "Science is built up of facts," writes Henri Poincaré, "as a house is built of stones, but an accumulation of facts is not a science, any more than a pile of stones is a house."³⁰ To the materials furnished by criticism must be applied the labor of the historian, if the facts are to be arranged in accordance with chronology, geography, and psychology, and if such a connection is to be established between them that they will explain one another. And the historian of Jesus must further make clear the close relation that subsists between the thought of Jesus (as revealed in his teaching) and his religious life (into which some of his words that are the outpourings of his soul afford us at least a glimpse) on the one hand, and his acts — his preaching and the influence he exercised — on the other.

The history of Jesus can never have the solid grounding in chronology which is the mechanical basis of any attempt to elicit the past. But it does not follow that all we can do is to describe certain moments in his career without arranging them in relation to one another. For that is just where historical reflection comes in to complete the results attained by purely critical research.

External circumstances influenced the development of the life of Jesus only to a limited extent and only at certain points. The decisive moments, the turning points of his ministry, were, indeed, determined by the reactions to his preaching, but the

³⁰ Henri Poincaré, *La science et l'hypothèse*, p. 168.

developments and changes in his teaching were due principally to the deepening of his thought and inner life, and to his experience. Historical study of Jesus, therefore, must start not from the events of his life but from his teaching and thought, and it is by observing the relation of the events to the various phases and aspects of this thought that we must seek to arrange the known facts in their right order between the two events which mark the limits of the gospel history — at the beginning, Jesus' acceptance, more or less complete, of the preaching of John the Baptist, and at the end, his crucifixion at Jerusalem, doubtless for political reasons (since he was condemned by a Roman tribunal) but only after his announcement of his return as the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven. Between these two points belongs the change of his scene of activity when he left Galilee for Judaea and Jerusalem.

Investigation should begin with the study of these three leading events in the life of Jesus. It is immediately apparent that for the first and last, in any case, and to a certain degree for the second, we have to do with problems directly touching the thought of Jesus. This is a favorable condition, for the thought of Jesus is more easily accessible to us than the events of his life. The belief of the early church in the resurrection of Jesus and the interpretation of the drama of the passion made by the first generation of Christians under the influence of this belief, gave a very special, distinct, and precise form to the religious and theological thought of primitive Christianity. That element in the evangelists' report of Jesus' sayings which is only the projection into the past of the belief of the church is easily recognized. Moreover, the thought of Jesus presents a highly individual character in its simplicity and coherence; it bears a direct relation to a religious experience which, indeed, we cannot comprehend in all its depth, but of which we can discern with some definiteness the dominant character. This is a great help in analyzing and reconstructing the thought itself, although that holds good, it is hardly necessary to say, only for the fundamental elements and leading traits, not for the details, and in particular not for all the applications of the principles he laid down. The spirit of Jesus' moral teaching, for instance, it

is impossible to confound with anything else, but there are moral precepts in the gospels of which we shall never be able to say with certainty whether they were actually formulated by Jesus or are only applications of his teaching made by his disciples.

Far from having reached the limit in the study of the life of Jesus, we are on the eve of a fresh movement. We shall never have a complete and detailed life of Jesus, but we may hope some day to possess a picture of the Master and his teaching so definite and so substantial that we shall feel assured of its reality in the full sense of the word — such a picture that we shall see Jesus as a concrete, living being, and not something unknown and unknowable, and that it will henceforth be futile to attempt to base Christianity on anything else than this person.

I should like to close by trying to sketch in its main features this picture of Jesus as I now see it.

Jesus lived in a world that lay under the expectation of a cataclysm whereby the present world was to be supplanted by a new one, so that Satan, the power of evil, should be annihilated, and God should reign with no obstacle to thwart the fulfilment of his will.

John the Baptist had appeared as the prophet of righteousness and repentance. He had announced the imminent coming in judgment of the Messiah, who should destroy sinners (including even the sons of Abraham) with his consuming fire. In order to escape this judgment, John warned his hearers to repent and be baptized. Jesus was won by John's preaching, he was baptized in the Jordan, and he remained with John, preaching and baptizing in the same spirit.

But he soon left John, the motive for the separation coming from the most characteristic trait of his own religious conception, namely his idea of God and of the obedience due to Him. This was not a theoretical conception, but an idea made real in life. The idea of God in the mind of Jesus was a personal experience, carried through to its ultimate consequences. To Jesus, God is not only the transcendent, holy, all-powerful and perfect being on whom depends all that is, but also the God within who speaks to his soul and in communion with whom he lives. He is further, if we may so express it, a 'program.' The

whole gospel message is summed up in the phrase of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done!" In the actual world, the accomplishment of the will of God is thwarted by the power of evil. God does not reign, but He ought to reign and He will reign. Jesus shared the Jewish apocalyptic belief that the antinomy between the present fact and the rightful condition of things will be resolved by the coming of the Messiah in glory to destroy Satan and to judge mankind. But while the Jewish belief was that the members of the chosen people would be received into the kingdom of the Messiah and the heathen shut out, Jesus, like John the Baptist, taught that the judgment of the messianic Son of Man will conform to strict justice. But he did not stop there. Sounding the depths of the idea of righteousness and repentance, as John had not done, Jesus reached the conviction that in no case can a man acquire a right of entrance into the kingdom of God. Repentance can modify his relation to God in the present and in the future, but it cannot wipe out the past; it cannot cause an offender against the divine will to deserve anything but condemnation or be anything else than a lost creature.

In order that God's reign shall not extend merely over a world empty of humanity, which would be virtual defeat for Him, something other than repentance is necessary, something which proceeds not from man but from God. This is pardon. Necessary for the fulfilment of the divine will, it is also implicit in the very nature of God, for while he is the God of righteousness and of perfect holiness, he is also a God of love — not only a being who finds even in the most degraded of his creatures a spark of good that permits the hope of a restoration to man's true destiny, but a God who loves the sinner and wishes to save him just because he is lost.

So when Jesus had come to see that the preaching of repentance does not provide for the fallen state of the offender against the divine will, nor satisfy the love of a God who wishes to pardon and save, he parted from John the Baptist and returned to Galilee, to preach there the gospel. The preaching of repentance was always to have its place in his ministry, but it was not to be the whole. Beside it and above it stands the announcement of

the pardon which God wishes to give. The emphasis is no longer on the act of the sinner who repents, but on the love of God who pardons. The initiative is no longer from man, but from God. Instead of waiting, like John in the wilderness, for the crowds, eager for salvation, to come to him, Jesus goes to the sinners, passes through countryside and towns to make his message heard.

From the very beginning of Jesus' ministry we can see at least the germ of a conviction that was destined to give it its peculiar character. According to Jewish ideas it was the Messiah who was to be the agent of God for the accomplishment of His work and the establishment of His kingdom. Jesus wishes to fulfil the will of God; he is the only one, he is well aware, to wish it completely; he draws the inference (either at the time of his parting from John or later) that he is called to carry out the will of God — in other words, to be the Messiah. Not that he ever felt that he already was the Messiah; the concept of the Messiah comprised attributes of power and glory which he knew were not realized in himself; but he felt that he was destined to be revealed as the Messiah at the moment when the kingdom of God should be made real.

That moment Jesus believed to be very near. He thought that the generation to which he was speaking would not pass before it came. Hence he set himself to his work with the conviction that time was pressing. His task was not to make ready the kingdom of God or to bring it about. That was to be the work of God. His task was to prepare men for the coming of the kingdom, for if they were to enter in, it was not enough that God should open its gates, it was also necessary that men should be brought to an inner state corresponding to the nature of the kingdom of God. To bring them to this state was the purpose of Jesus' teaching. He preached only obedience to God, but obedience in a far broader and deeper sense than Judaism had conceived it. It is defined by the verse in the Sermon on the Mount, "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." This saying opens wide vistas into the thought of Jesus. To invite men to realize in themselves the divine perfection assumes that they can know God, that is, that

He reveals himself to those who seek him. Jesus brings the revelation of a God, not transcendent merely, lost in an inaccessible heaven, but of a God who is near and within.

To make real in one's self the holiness and perfection of God is not to win, or to deserve, the kingdom of God; it is only to put one's self in a state to receive it as an unmerited gift. That is what Jesus preached to the crowds in Galilee, putting to flight evil spirits and seeing in their defeat a harbinger of the coming annihilation of Satan (whom he had once seen, in a prophetic vision, fall from heaven like a bolt of lightning) and meanwhile gathering about him a few followers to whom he gave a share in his work.

The gospel narratives do not permit us to follow Jesus in the comings and goings of his ministry about Capernaum. We can only see that his success was more limited, in particular more superficial, than some expressions used by the writers of the gospels might lead us to suppose. Difficulties soon arose, opposition developed from the side of the scribes and pharisees representing the Jewish tradition and especially on the part of Herod. A day dawned when it became impossible for Jesus to stay in Galilee, and when, after wandering in the neighboring regions with only fugitive appearances at Capernaum, he had to seek, outside of Galilee, another field of activity. It was then that he came to Judaea, to try to retrieve his failure, or partial failure, in Galilee.

Jesus had never hoped for an easy success. He knew how the prophets had been received by their contemporaries. Nevertheless, the repulse that he had suffered gave rise to a new train of thought in his mind. As the horizon became blacker and dangers more threatening, his thought turned in a new direction. His faith in God, his confidence in the final success of his work, suffered no diminution, but he understood that if God permitted him to be rejected and despised, and if he had to suffer, it was because his failures, his humiliation, and his sufferings were necessary to the accomplishment of his task, and formed a part of God's plan for the establishing of His kingdom. Later, when the future became still darker, when death appeared to him as possible, then as probable, and finally as in-

evitable, he came to believe that his death was necessary, because God permitted it. We must not attribute to Jesus anything resembling the theories of redemption which were later developed. He merely accepted what he considered to be the will of God, and if, as is at least possible, he employed the word 'ransom,' that, on his lips, was only a figure of speech. In order to accept the *via dolorosa* Jesus had to undergo a struggle. Many times, and up to the eve of his death, the idea came to his mind to ask of God a supernatural intervention which should destroy his enemies. But at the last he rejected this as a temptation of Satan, and bowed his head to the will of God.

In the ministry in Judaea and at Jerusalem the interest of the gospel narrative is concentrated on the inner drama. Of the external events we have but scanty information. We can see only that after a short period of activity in Jerusalem, in the course of which he gathered some friends but drew down the hostility of the authorities, Jesus was obliged to retire to Peraea. There he remained in contact with his Jerusalem disciples, awaiting the favorable moment for resuming the work that he had been compelled to intermit in the Holy City. As the Pass-over approached, he thought the time had come, or at least he determined upon a last attempt. But his adversaries had not remained inactive, and they had won the Roman governor over to their designs. Hardly had Jesus returned to Jerusalem when, in the night preceding the day on which the paschal lamb was sacrificed, he was arrested on the Mount of Olives by order of Pilate. A few hours later, after a hasty trial the outcome of which had been determined in advance, he expired on the cross.

Τετέλεσται, 'It is finished.' Such, according to the Fourth Gospel, were the last words that fell from the lips of the dying Jesus. And indeed Pilate and the Jews thought that they were done with the Galilean prophet. But the faith, still feeble and wavering as it was, which he had sown in the hearts of his disciples, had roots too deep to be thus stifled. Nothing was finished. In reality everything was beginning. Belief in the resurrection was to come into being, and with and through it, Christianity, which was destined to conquer the ancient world and to cross the centuries.

Τετέλεσται can also mean 'It is accomplished,' 'It is perfect.' When Jesus died something vast was accomplished. Into the web of human history had entered a man whose life was the pure reflection of the divine life, and who by it brought to humanity so profound a revelation of God as has never been equalled, before him or since his time. It remains to-day as fresh, as full of promise, as inexhaustible, as it was nineteen hundred years ago.

The problem has here been approached only from the point of view of history, but the conclusions to which history thus leads raise a question that goes beyond the range of history and puts before every human soul the problem of life itself, its meaning, the direction in which it ought to be turned, or — to use the expression of Bertram — the 'yes' or 'no' that must be spoken in answer to the conception of human destiny offered in the teaching of Jesus. Even if that should prove to be the sole result of the historical study of the ministry of Jesus, nevertheless that study does not deserve to be neglected. It would indeed be a pity if its place were taken by a mere meditation upon the gospels.

SOME PROBLEMS IN THE CRITICISM OF THE SOURCES FOR EARLY BUDDHIST HISTORY

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BUDDHIST literature is not complete in any one language. The primary sources for the study of Buddhism consist of texts in Pali, in Sanskrit (with some fragments in Prakrit, and a few texts in a mixed dialect — as though composed by men who were trying to turn Prakrit into Sanskrit but who had a very imperfect knowledge of Sanskrit grammar), in Chinese, in Tibetan, and in several of the languages which were current in Chinese Turkestan. There are also texts in Mongolian, but these seem to be derivatives from Tibetan, and not of primary importance.

These various texts do not represent the translation of one common tradition into different languages. They give various divergent versions and amplified reworkings of a primitive nucleus. All of them must be studied and compared critically if we are to understand Buddhism as a whole. It is only through a critical comparison of these variant versions that we may be able ultimately to reach back beyond canonical Buddhism in the two forms which have been preserved.

There are many who claim that our only primary sources are the Pali texts, that all other sources must be treated as secondary. Under this view the discrepancies between the Pali and the non-pali sources are all regarded as depending upon the exactitude with which the original tradition has been preserved; the non-pali texts are the result of alterations in and reworkings of the original tradition, the original tradition has been faithfully preserved in the Pali texts, and the non-pali texts have become so much contaminated that their value for the study of early Buddhism is negligible, since there is in them nothing old which has not been preserved in a better form in Pali. To this view I cannot subscribe.

Early studies of Buddhism, which began a little over a century ago, were based partly on studies of Pali texts by mis-

sionaries in Ceylon, and partly on the study of Sanskrit manuscripts from Nepal, together with fragmentary information derived from Tibetan, Chinese, and Mongolian sources. Koepen's great work, *Die Religion des Buddha* (1879), which summed up these early, uncritical studies has, in many portions, not yet been superseded. The later books on Buddhism have been much more limited in scope.

With the foundation of the Pali Text Society in 1882 under the leadership of Rhys Davids the current began to set strongly towards the study of Pali. The activity of most students of Buddhism was drafted into the edition, translation, and interpretation of the Pali texts. During the course of some forty-five years practically all of the Pali canonical texts, the commentaries on them, and much of the mediaeval Sinhalese work has been edited, and a considerable portion translated. Little remains to be done in the way of preliminary editing, but the editions are hasty and of varying merit. Eventually they will all have to be done over again more critically.

Most students of Pali, under the enthusiasm of working with a definite canon in a single language and a comparatively homogeneous block of texts, have tended to exaggerate the value of the Pali tradition, have tended to claim that the Pali canon represents the main trunk of Buddhist tradition, that the Pali texts are to be treated practically as a unit both as texts and as doctrine, and that all non-pali texts can safely be ignored, at least in so far as Buddhism down through the third century B.C. is concerned. They conceive that all it is necessary to do is to sift out some later accretions (largely on the basis of some subjective element, the intuition of each individual author), and that what is left will be the oldest form of canonical Buddhism. This is then confidently identified with primitive Buddhism, and this with the Buddhism of Buddha himself.

The matter is not so simple as that. Some voices have been raised in opposition, demanding a more searching objective critique of the Pali texts themselves, and asking that greater consideration be shown to the Chinese, Sanskrit, Prakrit, Tibetan, and other sources. Now that the Pali texts have been made available almost in their entirety we are approaching a

new era in Buddhist studies. Attention is now beginning to shift strongly to the non-pali sources, which during the Pali period of Buddhist studies have received only sporadic attention. Some of the Sanskrit texts from Nepal have been edited, and in the late eighteen-nineties a *Bibliotheca Buddhica* was begun at Saint Petersburg for the systematic editing of non-pali texts. Up to the present some twenty volumes have been issued, mostly in Sanskrit and Tibetan. It has been a thin trickle as compared to the editions of the Pali Text Society. With few exceptions the work which has been done with the non-pali sources has centred around later texts which are of value for their philosophical, religious, or story content; there has been little systematic effort at isolating the old canonical nucleus. The Chinese texts which are the most important for this particular purpose have hardly been touched.

In the form of the canon which was preserved in Ceylon, Buddhism made its way to Burma, Siam, Cambodia, and other parts of south-eastern Asia, and has maintained itself to the present day in most of these countries with little change. In India, Buddhism disintegrated and disappeared, absorbed back into Hinduism by about the thirteenth century after Christ. The monasteries and libraries were destroyed or fell into ruin, and the climate of India is not kind to perishable objects in ruins. Some Hindu kings persecuted Buddhism (witness Hiuen Tsiang's almost contemporary account of Śāśaṅka of Bengal of about 600 A.D.), and the Huns and Mohammedans made a clean sweep of everything they came to.

Very few Buddhist texts (and most of them belong to the very latest semi-hindu period) have been preserved in India proper. But we know that in addition to a huge later literature made up of theology, philosophy, technical treatises of all kinds, devotional works dealing with worship and conduct, pious stories and legends, and new comprehensive texts which better represented the spirit of the later religion and supplanted the old canonical texts in popular esteem, at least one of the sects, and that the largest and most influential, had a complete canon in Sanskrit, probably based on an earlier Prakrit canon, dating from the first century after Christ. Other sects

had, if not comprehensive canons, at least considerable collections in various Prakrit dialects.

But in the secluded mountain valley of Nepal, which was shut off by difficult natural barriers from the turbulent history of India proper, Buddhism and some of its literature was preserved. This Sanskrit Buddhist literature came to light at the beginning of the nineteenth century — a chance, haphazard remnant which contained some old and important texts but nothing that in its present form can safely be dated before the early centuries of the Christian era.

Brahmanism and Hinduism bear the same relationship to Buddhism that Judaism bears to Christianity. On the one hand we have tribal or racial or national religions with national gods, and national customs and practices and beliefs. On the other hand we have purely soteric religions which rise above all limitations of tribe, race, and nationality to the doctrine of a universal salvation for all men who will subscribe to a few simple teachings, follow a few simple rules of ethical conduct, abandon traditional ritual and theology with their multitude of detailed articles of practice and belief, and endeavor to reach their goal by means of a living personal experience. It was for this reason that Buddhism and Christianity became great missionary religions, while Hinduism and Judaism did not. Both Christianity and Buddhism were practically exiled from the countries of their birth; both became firmly domiciled in foreign lands.

It is curious that Christianity failed in the East, although at one time there was a considerable Christian community in eastern Persia, and although the Nestorians penetrated Central Asia as far as China. It is curious that Buddhism failed in the West, but swept victorious across eastern Asia. We have the authority of the Aśoka inscriptions (third century B.C.) for the sending of Buddhist missionaries as far west as Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, Macedonia, and Epirus, and Flinders Petrie has suggested that the marked development of monasticism in Egypt shortly before the Christian era may have been the result of these Buddhist missions. Although it is possible that some traces of Buddhist influence are to be found in early

Christian literature, Buddhism never became domiciled in the West as a living religion.

At some time between the third century B.C. and the first Christian century Buddhism established itself in Central Asia, and seems to have penetrated to China during the first century after Christ. From that time onward a large number of Indian Buddhist texts were translated into Chinese, at first by monks from Central Asia, then by Indian monks who went to China, and lastly by Chinese monks who journeyed to India, studied there for years, and returned to China with Buddhist texts and a knowledge of Indian languages.

These journeys of Indian and Chinese monks exemplify clearly an important element of contrast between the Indian and the Chinese character, on the one hand little or no interest in history and the accurate recording of worldly matters, on the other hand a wonderfully developed historical sense and a minute accuracy in recording and describing worldly affairs. No Indian has left a line to record his adventurous journeys or describe his experiences in China. Many Chinese have left brief summaries of their travels. Some have left long and minutely detailed accounts of their journeys, and accurate descriptions of India and of the other countries through which they passed, enlivened by pious stories and legends concerning the various holy sites which they visited.

The most extensive and valuable of these is Hiuen Tsiang's "Buddhist Records of the Western World." This is one of the most important historical documents of antiquity. Hiuen Tsiang is the Pausanias of India, and his book has been the vade mecum of Indian archaeologists. His journey to India and back across Central Asia, over three or four thousand miles of the most difficult country in the world, covered the years 630-645 A.D. The Records give an accurate and detailed account of his journey, enlivened by a multitude of local legends and stories, which are of great value since they are based on sources which have been lost or give variants from sources which have been preserved. The "Life," which was composed by one of his pupils, gives many interesting personal details and ex-

periences which Hiuen Tsiang did not consider worthy of a place in his serious historical and religious narrative. Fa Hien (399-415 A.D.) gives a vivid description of his journey to India by land, his long stay there, and his adventurous return journey to China by sea. The perils attendant upon an ocean voyage at this period are portrayed in a remarkable way. It took him six years to reach Central India; stoppages there extended over six more years; and on his return it took him three years to reach China by sea, including stops in Ceylon and Java. An unnamed author who met Fa Hien and spent much time with him quotes him as follows:

When I look back on what I have gone through, my heart is involuntarily moved and the sweat breaks forth. That I encountered danger and trod the most perilous places, without thinking of or sparing myself, was because I had a definite aim, and thought of nothing but to do my best in simplicity and straightforwardness. Thus it was that I exposed my life where death seemed inevitable, if I might accomplish only a ten-thousandth part of what I hoped.

And the author ends with the following remarkable words:

These words affected me in turn, and I thought, This man is one of those who have seldom been seen from ancient times to the present. Since the Great Doctrine flowed on to the East, there has been no one to be compared with Hien in his forgetfulness of self and search for the Law. Henceforth I know that the influence of sincerity finds no obstacle, however great, which it does not overcome, and that force of will does not fail to accomplish whatever service it undertakes. Does not the accomplishing of such service arise from forgetting and disregarding what is generally considered as important, and attaching importance to what is generally forgotten?

Some of the greatest hearts in the world have beaten in the breasts of these simple Chinese pilgrims. Concerning the civilizing influence of Buddhism in Central Asia Fa Hien remarks:

From the sandy desert westwards on to India, the beauty of the dignified demeanor of the monkhood and of the transforming influence of the Law was beyond the power of language fully to describe.

I-Tsing (671-695 A.D.), who was especially interested in the Vinaya, gives many interesting details of monastic life and conduct in India at that period.

These Chinese translations of Indian Buddhist texts were later gathered together into what is known as the Chinese

Tripitaka, of which several old editions are known. Modern semi-critical editions have been published at Tokyo and Kyoto. Recently there has been completed in Japan, under the editorship of Takakusu, a more comprehensive and critical edition, published in western form in sixty large volumes. An English translation would probably occupy three times the space. Only the surface of this immense material has been scratched as yet. Its great importance lies in the fact that it contains translations of a large number of old canonical texts of which the Indian originals have been lost.

The Pali canon is not represented as a whole in Chinese. Only a few of the translations go back to Pali originals. The Chinese Tripitaka consists mainly of translations from Sanskrit and Prakrit, but the old Sanskrit canon itself is not found in Chinese as a unit, although most of it seems to be present in a scattered form. In particular it contains five complete Vinayas (texts on monastic discipline) of five different schools, all of which differ considerably from the Pali Vinaya. The French are just beginning a critical analysis of these and a systematic comparison of them with the Pali Vinaya. It also contains four Agamas, which correspond to the first four Nikāyas, although there is some difference in content (some Pali Suttas not being represented in Chinese, and vice versa), great difference in the arrangement of the texts within the individual Agamas, and considerable difference in the texts of corresponding Sutras. It also contains texts corresponding to some of those of the fifth Pali Nikāya, but it is still uncertain how many of the fifteen texts of this Pali Nikāya are represented in Chinese, and whether the Chinese ever knew a fifth Agama as a unit. The important Sutta Nipāta is not found in Chinese as a unit, but practically all the sections of it are found scattered through the Chinese collections. It is not yet certain whether all these Chinese texts represent translations from the works of one Indian school of Buddhism or from several. Further it contains seven Abhidharma texts, but these seem to differ in toto from the Pali Abhidhamma texts, whereas the Vinaya and Agama texts exhibit great similarity.

During the seventh century after Christ Buddhism was introduced into Tibet and soon became firmly established there as the dominant religion of the country. In the course of the next five or six hundred years a large number of Indian Buddhist texts were translated into Tibetan. These translations were gathered together into two huge collections known as Kanjur and Tanjur. The former consists of canonical and fundamental texts. The latter consists of commentaries and various supplementary and miscellaneous treatises. The Kanjur, in its different editions, comprises a hundred, or a hundred and eight, volumes; the Tanjur two hundred and twenty-five volumes. A large part of this huge mass of material is composed of late Tantric texts, but much of it consists of important Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna texts of which the Indian originals have been lost, and of which many have not been preserved in Chinese translations.

Each volume is about twenty-six inches long, six inches wide, and eight inches thick, and weighs about ten pounds. The volumes average about five hundred folios (a thousand pages). They are printed from wooden blocks on rough country paper. The printing is often carelessly done, especially in the common Narthang edition, and many sheets are almost or quite illegible. Often the printers, if not checked carefully, will skip batches of sheets in thick volumes. The average purchaser does not check the number of folios and does not care much about legibility, for the volumes are purchased rather for worship than for reading and study. Ordinarily the purchaser brings his own paper. By taking good paper, carefully supervising the printing, and checking the folios it would be possible to secure good, legible copies. The presses unfortunately are at present practically inaccessible to Europeans.

At least four editions are known, the Narthang edition from Central Tibet, the Derge and the so-called Choni editions from eastern Tibet, and the Peking or Palace edition, which is printed in red ink. There may be other editions, complete or partial. The Derge edition is said to be printed from metal plates and is in general the most legible. The wooden blocks of the present Narthang edition are said to have been cut in 1731.

Narthing alone is said to keep complete copies in stock. Ordinarily copies are printed as ordered, and there is one open printing-season a year. No critical work has yet been done on these various editions. An adequate index of the Tanjur has been made by Cordier, but for the more important Kanjur we have only the brief and inadequate summaries made long ago by Schmidt and by Csoma de Körös and some extracts dug out by Schiefner, Rockhill, Feer, Levi, Przyluski, and a few others. I hope that Professor Staël-Holstein of the Harvard-Yenching Institute can be persuaded to set his staff of assistants in Peking to work on a detailed analysis of the Kanjur. A detailed analysis rather than a mere index is required.

Chinese Turkestan lies between Tibet and Siberia on the south and north, and between China and Russian Turkestan on the east and west. It is an elevated plain surrounded on the south, west, and north by a huge ring of the highest mountains in the world. Its eastern portion is shut off from China and Mongolia by large salt marshes and deserts and broken country made up of low chains of mountains. The country is roughly an ellipse about a thousand miles long and five hundred miles wide at the broadest part. The central part, more than half of the total area, is a great desert covered with sand-dunes running up to three hundred feet in height, with here and there bare strips of hard clay surface between the lines of dunes. The dunes are constantly shifting their position because of the severe winds which prevail, and at many places on the edge of the desert they keep encroaching upon the habitable area. One large, sluggish river, the Tarim, fringes the desert on the west, north, and east, and finally dies away in a great salt marsh.

The present population of about two millions dwells in a string of oases which cling to the bases of the mountains on the south, west, and north. Many rivers and torrents pour down from the mountains into the desert. Most of these are merely summer freshets. The larger ones are partially or entirely exhausted in irrigating the oases and soon die away in the desert. At one time many of these streams pushed out much farther into the desert, and many cities and towns have been

discovered buried under the sand far out beyond the present line of cultivation. The old river beds can often be traced by lines of bare, dead trees nearly covered by sand.

During the first thousand years of the Christian era a broad belt of cultivation extended all the way along the mountains, and there were many flourishing cities. Now there are only a few oases and a much inferior civilization. During the first millennium B.C. the population seems to have been predominantly Aryan. Beginning about the third century B.C. Ural-Altaic tribes began to press down in increasing numbers from the north and east, driving the Aryans west and south. Many of these Aryan tribes seem to have pushed into Persia, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, India, and the mountainous country north of the Panjab. These and later movements of the same sort exerted a profound influence on the history of India and western Asia, and were deeply felt even in Europe. During the first thousand years of the Christian era the country was a battle-ground between Aryans of various breeds, Ural-Altaic tribes (chiefly Turkish — the common language today is still Turkish), Chinese, Tibetans, and Mongols. It was also a battle-ground between Buddhists, Nestorians, Manichaeans, and Mohammedans. Today the prevailing religion is Mohammedanism. The civilization declined between the years 900 and 1000 A.D., whether by destruction wrought by the hand of man or by the desiccation of Central Asia is not certain. Probably both causes were at work.

The great historical importance of this country lies in the fact that it was on the main trade-route between China and the West, and therefore became a great melting-pot of various cultures. Until the last generation the country was but little known to western geographers and historians. There were stray fragments of information in Chinese, Greek, Roman, and Mohammedan historians and geographers and a little knowledge gleaned from occasional mediaeval and modern travellers and explorers, but nothing detailed and scientific.

In 1890 Lieutenant Bower, while on an official mission to Turkestan, happened to be at one of the northern oases. There he was told by two Turks of a buried city which they had

found in the desert. These men were treasure-seekers. For long it had been the habit of natives to ransack the ruins of old cities and Buddhist stūpas and monasteries. From as far back as 1866 there had been vague reports of such treasure-seeking but no general interest had been aroused. Doubtless many manuscripts had been found and thrown away as worthless by such ignorant treasure-seekers. These two men had been hunting for treasure but had found only a book. Bower, out of curiosity, bought the manuscript and took it back to Calcutta. It consisted of fifty-one sheets of birchbark, and turned out to be written in an old Indian alphabet and language and to contain astrological and medical texts. It dated from the fourth century after Christ.

The find immediately aroused the interest of Sanskritists, since the manuscripts preserved in India are all comparatively late, few being dated earlier than the twelfth century. The British and Russian governments at once instructed their consular agents at Kashgar and elsewhere to be on the lookout and to try to secure other manuscripts from native treasure-seekers. During the following ten years a considerable number of manuscript fragments came to light. Then systematic exploration and scientific expeditions led by Russians, British, Germans, French, and others were undertaken. The culminating point was the discovery in 1907 by Aurel Stein at Tun-huang, on the border of Turkestan and China, of a walled-up cave filled with a solid mass of bundles containing manuscripts and paintings, estimated to occupy not less than five hundred cubic feet of space. They all seem to be dated between the fifth century and the tenth century after Christ; at the latter date the site was abandoned. Expeditions have continued, but there still remains much to be done.

The material from Turkestan as a whole, in addition to many frescoes and objects which throw light on the material life of the time, consists of a large number of complete Chinese and Tibetan manuscripts, some complete manuscripts in other languages, and a vast number of fragments and single sheets. The writing is on palm-leaves, birchbark, wood, bamboo-strips, leather, paper, and silk, in a dozen different alphabets

and a dozen different languages. The manuscripts range in date between the first and tenth centuries after Christ, and owe their remarkable preservation to the exceedingly dry climate of Turkestan.

One of the languages is a hitherto unknown Indo-European language written in an Indian alphabet. Another is a hitherto unknown Iranian dialect also written in an Indian alphabet. Three other Iranian dialects are represented. There are some manuscripts in old Turkish, some three hundred years older than any documents previously known in that language. There is abundant new material for the study of the Manichaeans and Nestorians. But for the Sanskritist the most important fact is the consideration that for almost a thousand years Chinese Turkestan was predominantly Buddhist, and that the majority of the manuscripts contain Buddhist texts in various languages and various alphabets. There seems to be no hope of finding a complete copy of the old Sanskrit canon, but the mass of fragments, when they are all published, deciphered, and studied, will be of immense critical value for the study of Buddhism.

In Ceylon, where a very different language was spoken, and where there was no Brahman hierarchy which might keep alive the old religion, Buddhism triumphed completely and Pali became crystallized as a sacred language which underwent no further change. The Pali canon was preserved unchanged as a sacred scripture. In India Pali did not maintain itself along with the other languages into which the Buddhist texts had been translated. As Buddhism spread over the country the Buddhist texts were transformed into various local dialects, and when by the first century after Christ Sanskrit came into general use as the language of literature par excellence, the Buddhist texts were translated into Sanskrit by at least one of the sects and that the largest and most influential.

What is Pali? We do not know in what dialect Buddha himself taught. Was it Māgadhi, the dialect of the country in which he spent the greater part of his life? Was it the dialect of his home-country farther to the north? Was it some sort

of a koinê in use over the greater part of northern India? It seems certain that Pali was not Māgadhī. The linguistic material, incomplete as the early inscriptional evidence is, seems to point farther west. The basic characteristics of Pali resemble those of the western group of Indian dialects rather than those of the eastern group. Its basis was probably some western dialect, but with the retention of other and older elements. To some extent it seems to be composite and to betray considerable artificiality.

Many efforts have been made to localize Pali but there is still wide diversity of opinion. On the other hand some think that it was a koinê spoken over the greater part of northern India during the third century B.C. or even earlier. This seems very doubtful since the Aśoka inscriptions of the third century B.C. are not in Pali, and they seem to represent an official koinê understood over the greater part of northern India. The evidence is so confusing that at present it is impossible to decide whether Pali represents a linguistic stage just preceding or just following the Aśoka inscriptions. Some, with good reason, would ascribe it to the second century B.C. It certainly has not been proved that Pali represents a linguistic stage historically older than that of the Aśoka inscriptions. The view taken seems to depend on the author's opinion that the Pali texts (judged on the basis of their general content) are comparatively early or comparatively late.

From various sources we have discrepant accounts of four Buddhist councils. All the sources agree that shortly after the Buddha's death five hundred monks met together at Rājagṛha in Magadha and rehearsed the Vinaya and the Dhamma (rules of monastic discipline and doctrinal sermons and discussions), calling to mind the words of the Buddha on various occasions. Some of the northern sources, in their pious zeal, include even the Abhidharma (scholastic lists and summaries of doctrine which gradually led over into philosophy). This claim must surely be rejected. But, omitting the Abhidharma, all the sources agree in carrying back all essential portions of the canon to the time just following the Buddha's death early in

the fifth century B.C. There may be an element of truth in the tradition, but it is manifestly impossible to accept it for the whole of our Vinaya and Sutta Pitakas in either their southern or northern forms.

All sources agree that a second council was held a hundred years after the death of the Buddha, but as its object was primarily that of ruling on the orthodoxy or heterodoxy of ten points of monastic conduct which were gaining the approval of certain groups of monks (especially the monks of Vaiśālī to the northwest of Magadha), we do not need to consider it. But it may have been the entering wedge for the first great split into sects, that of conservatives and liberals (Theravādins and Mahāsaṅghikas).

According to our Pali sources a third council was held in the third century B.C. during the reign of king Aśoka. The non-pali sources ignore this council entirely or have deliberately suppressed any reference to it. In either case it would seem to have been not a great general council which was participated in by all groups of monks from all parts of India but a party-meeting of the Theravādins (Elders or Conservatives) of Magadha and adjacent districts, who are now represented in Ceylon, and through whom, or a branch of whom, the Pali canon has been transmitted to us. The object of this council, assuming that it is really historical, seems to have been that of reviewing the doctrine and discipline, purging them of elements which were disapproved of by the group, and establishing them more firmly on an approved canonical basis. How much of the Pali Abhidhamma may be assumed to have been in existence at the time is uncertain. The council may even have rearranged a loose, floating mass of Buddhist texts into the particular form in which we now have the Pali canon. Both the Pali and the non-pali texts seem to recognize the fact that there was an earlier arrangement of texts into nine or twelve rather loose groups, partly by subject matter and partly by reference to different types of verse and prose. Whether such a rearrangement, if one is to be assumed, took place before or at this third council is uncertain. According to the Buddhists of Ceylon it was this canon of the third century, in its entirety and in its

present form, which was taken to Ceylon by Mahinda, the son of Aśoka, and finally reduced to writing there about the middle of the first century B.C.

There is no mention of such a council in the Aśoka inscriptions, and it cannot be argued that all the inscriptions are earlier than the council. According to the Pali sources the council was held during the seventeenth year of Aśoka's reign, and some of the longest and most important inscriptions seem to come from the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh years of his reign. The Aśoka inscriptions deal almost exclusively with religion in general and with Buddhism in particular. It seems almost impossible that such an ardent Buddhist and proselytizer as Aśoka could have ignored such an event as a great general council held under his auspices. His silence throws grave doubts on the trustworthiness of the Pali tradition.

Although the Aśoka inscriptions make no mention of a Buddhist canon, they do name seven definite texts which seem to correspond in a general way to certain suttas and collections of stanzas which are found in our Pali texts, but the words used do not correspond to the Pali forms. Either Aśoka did not know texts in Pali, as seems most likely, or if he did these names were transformed into the official koinê used in his inscriptions. It may well be argued that Pali really represents a development of the period immediately following Aśoka, that Buddhism may have been taken to Ceylon during the third century B.C., but that the complete canon may not have been taken there in its Pali form until some time during the next century or so.

According to the non-pali sources a fourth council was held in northwestern India during the reign of king Kanishka in the first century after Christ. They call it the third council, either because they knew nothing of the council of the third century B.C. or because they did not recognize its authority as binding upon all groups. It is uncertain whether ignorance or suppression is involved. The Pali school of Ceylon knows nothing about a fourth council, does not recognize it in any way.

According to one account this fourth council established a canon in Sanskrit. According to another account this council

merely composed commentaries upon an already existing canon. It may well be argued that this fourth council merely marks the translation into Sanskrit from Prakrit, with some additions, perhaps, of an already existing canon reaching back possibly to the second century B.C., and that the formation of commentaries merely marks the passage from a simple canonical stage of religion to a more sophisticated scholastic stage. If so, how much did this older collection of texts differ from the Pali canon and what is its relationship to it?

Most of the Sanskrit Divyāvadāna is composed of extracts from the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādins. How far does this in its present form correspond to the Vinaya of the canon of the first Christian century, or to a supposed older collection? Most of the stories contain as a nucleus some simple narrative connected with some Vinaya rule or some short discourse (told in a Sanskrit style very similar to the archaic Pali style), which is usually found in almost exactly the same form in the Pali canon. Prefixed to this is a narrative of considerable length, in a later Sanskrit style, leading up to the nucleus and giving an account of the earlier parts of the lives of the principals of the stories, and added in the same later style is a Jātaka dealing with the previous births of the actors in the stories. It is curious that some of the Pali commentaries give, as leading up to the canonical nucleus, stories of essentially the same nature as those of the Divyāvadāna but simpler in character. The present Pali commentaries are not earlier than about the fifth Christian century, but are doubtless based on earlier commentaries. What is the date of these additional narratives? What is their relation to the corresponding narratives of the Divyāvadāna? What is the date of this later stratum of the Divyāvadāna? It is impossible to believe, as one might be inclined to do, that these developed narratives of the Divyāvadāna can be later than the simpler narratives of the Pali commentaries of the fifth Christian century. The authenticated dates for the translation into Chinese of many of these stories of the Divyāvadāna prove that they must be considerably older than this.

This Sanskrit canon was that of the powerful Sarvāstivādin sect of northwestern India and Kashmir, a branch of the

Theravādin or Conservative school of Magadha (in the south central part of northern India) to which the Pali canon belongs. The relation of the other schools in India to this Sanskrit canon and to the fourth council is doubtful. It may be noted that this Sanskrit canon contained seven Abhidharma texts, just as the Pali canon contains seven Abhidhamma texts. But these two sets of texts seem to be entirely unrelated. They are not variants from one common tradition but independent compositions. On the other hand the Vinayas and Suttas show marked similarity, although there are great variations in arrangement and in detail. *Dirgha*, *Madhyama*, *Samyukta*, and *Ekottara* Agamas correspond to the *Dīgha*, *Majjhima*, *Samyutta*, and *Anguttara Nikāyas* of the Pali. It is uncertain whether the *Khuddaka Nikāya*, which consists of fifteen separate texts in its Pali form, was represented as a unit, but a considerable number of its texts have been preserved independently in Chinese translations. Several of the Pali texts of this fifth *Nikāya* seem to be very late, the latest portions of the whole Pali canon. Apart from the tradition of a canon formed in the first century after Christ, or translated into Sanskrit at that date, there seems to be independent evidence to prove that the northern Agamas and Vinayas are at least as old as *Aśvaghoṣa* of the first Christian century. It is noteworthy that, judging from the Chinese translations, the differences between the two canons are least in the *Dīgha* and greatest in the *Anguttara Nikāya*. This seems to imply that on the whole the latter is the latest of the four *Nikāyas*, and therefore shows less of the original primitive tradition.

In addition to the texts which have been referred to we have in Pali a large and comprehensive work of systematic theology, the *Visuddhimagga* of *Buddhaghosa*, dating from the fifth century after Christ. This is an independent work, composed in Ceylon, which gives a traditional summing up, interpretation, and elucidation of the Pali canon as a whole from the point of view of the Sinhalese school. We tend to see obscure matters and difficult passages of the Pali canon in the light in which *Buddhaghosa* saw them, and to give to technical terms

the shade of meaning which Buddhaghosa gave to them. Frequently the exact shade of meaning given to such technical terms may involve wide differences of doctrine. The *Nettipakaraṇa* is another interpretative work which is intermediate between the *Abhidhamma* and the *Visuddhimagga*. It seems to date from the first Christian century. Not much later is the somewhat similar *Peṭakopadesa*. In Burma the two latter works are given a place in the canon. None of the three has been studied critically.

There is also another large and comprehensive work of systematic theology, the *Abhidharmakośa* of Vasubandhu with the *Vyākhyā* of Yaśomitra (composed in India at about the fifth century after Christ), which gives a traditional summing up, interpretation, and elucidation of the Sanskrit canon of the *Sarvāstivādins* and the early commentaries upon it. Only a small part of this great work has been preserved in Sanskrit. After long years of labor La Vallée Poussin has given us a complete translation based largely on Tibetan sources.

We need a systematic comparison of Buddhaghosa, the other Pali commentators, and the *Abhidhamma* with the Pali canon, and of Vasubandhu, the Sanskrit *Abhidharma*, and the old commentaries, which are preserved in Chinese, with the Sanskrit canon, in so far as that can be reconstructed from the various non-pali sources. Then we need a systematic comparison of Vasubandhu with Buddhaghosa, and eventually of the Sanskrit canon with the Pali canon. Back of this would lie precanonical Buddhism, and faintly glimmering in the distance the Buddhism of Buddha himself.

A large part of the Pali canon consists of mingled prose and verse. It seems clear that on the whole the verse is older linguistically than the prose, unless in some cases verses were composed later in imitation of an archaic style. The prose narrative does not seem to have been so definitely fixed as was the verse: it might vary from narrator to narrator and from time to time. The verse is of a moralizing nature, or gives merely the chief point of a story, or a mere sketch of it in a sort of ballad style as in some sections of the *Sutta Nipāta*. We have as yet no complete index of these *gāthās* so that we might easily com-

pare repeated ones and try to determine in which setting they are original. There has been no systematic study of the *gāthās* in relation to the surrounding prose narratives or of sections which are found repeated in different parts of the canon.

For instance the *Udāna*, a short text of less than a hundred pages, consists of eighty short stories in groups of ten each, each group taking its name from some one story although the stories in each group have no really essential connection. Each story ends with one or more stanzas of a moralizing nature, and the stanzas seem to be older linguistically than the prose. There may be something in the stanza which fits vaguely, but one or two of the words may have no real application to the setting described by the prose. If from the very beginning the prose story which is given accompanied the stanzas, the workmanship is unbelievably clumsy. Did all the stanzas originally have an accompanying prose narrative? Did the stanzas exist first independently without any prose accompaniment? Then at a later period were prose narratives invented to serve as introductions, or did some of the stanzas become attached to old independent prose narratives because of certain corresponding words or ideas which the stanzas contained? Then in order to round out the collection were other prose narratives invented to fit the rest of the stanzas? Some of the prose narratives are so slight and pointless that they could hardly have had a separate existence at any time.

The Pali *Jātaka* consists of prose stories plus stanzas which are of a moralizing nature, but which give in addition a slight sketch of the essential features of the stories. We know definitely that the present prose, which actually calls itself a commentary, dates from the fifth century after Christ, although claiming to be based on older commentaries, and that the original canonical *Jātaka* consisted of stanzas alone. The accompanying prose was not so rigidly fixed. What we have is a particular literary fixation of the prose stories, which underwent little or no further change. At what date did the fixation represented by our present text take place? Many of the stories are attested by sculptures which are as early as the second century B.C., and yet there seems to be no evidence

which proves that even a Jātaka in verse formed part of the Sanskrit canon.

The Pali Dhammapada is entirely in verse, and consists of moralizing stanzas similar to those of the Udāna. Is it an anthology made up of independent stanzas and stanzas torn from their setting in other works, or did prose stories accompany the stanzas from the very beginning, or were prose stories composed later and attached to the stanzas as a sort of commentary in order to give them a definite literary setting? At any rate a prose accompaniment was fixed by the fifth century after Christ, but as an independent commentary which was not given a place in the canon. In the case of the very similar Udāna, prose and verse together were fixed as canonical at an early date.

The Pali Itivuttaka also consists of prose and verse, but in this case the prose is not narrative. For the most part prose and verse contain essentially the same material expressed in these two different forms, and the verse does not seem to be essentially older than the prose.

The oldest part of the Vinaya consists of the Pātimokkha, lists of offences against monastic discipline which involved excommunication from the Order or penances of various sorts. This does not exist by itself in Pali, but is found accompanied by an old commentary which gives, often at considerable length, the circumstances under which the rules were laid down. The old Kammavācā dealt with details of monastic life, such as ordination, uposatha, clothing, food, medicines, and so forth. This too has come down to us only as accompanied by a commentary, the important Mahāvagga and Cullavagga, which give in detail the circumstances under which each rule was laid down, relate some events in the life of the Buddha, and contain some sermons. It is important to note that in the Pali and the non-pali Vinayas the rules are frequently based on very different stories. How far do these explanatory narratives go back to one common old tradition faithfully preserved in Pali but much altered by the other schools? How far do they represent independent developments among the various schools with cross-currents of borrowing?

A careful comparison has recently been made by Przyluski of the stanzas of lamentation which were recited by various persons after the death of the Buddha, and of the accompanying prose narratives. This is based on the Sanskrit Avadāna Śataka, the Chinese Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādins, two Chinese versions of the Samyukta Agama, a Chinese version of the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, the Tibetan Vinaya, the Pali Samyutta Nikāya and the Pali Mahāparinibbāna Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya. The comparison is not altogether in favor of the Pali. There are clearly involved two versions, a shorter and simpler one, chiefly in verse, and a much longer and more elaborate one, chiefly in prose with interspersed stanzas. The Pali, as compared with the other versions, seems to be guilty both of suppressions and additions due to particular tendencies which grew up within the Pali school. May not the same thing be equally true of other passages and narratives which deal with matters of doctrine?

The few other comparisons of this nature which have been made up to the present and which seem to lead to contradictory results (for instance those of Oldenberg and Tuneld) have been much too narrow in scope. It must be admitted that the non-pali texts in their present form come from a later period than the Pali texts, and contain later material which has been poured around the older material in order to give it a more developed literary form. The essential thing is to extract the nucleus and to compare this with the Pali form, in order to determine, if possible, whether the Pali also may not betray a composite character and contain later material which has been poured around an old nucleus. In cases where there is general agreement in the subject-matter of the nucleus but differences of reading in particular words and phrases, sometimes the Pali reading seems to be better, sometimes the non-pali reading seems superior. It looks as though both versions might be based on translations or adaptations from some older dialect, as though the linguistic forms and etymologies of some words had been understood differently in the two versions. It is by no means certain that the Pali text is always to be regarded as superior.

I feel more and more confident that systematic comparisons carried out on a broad basis would prove that the Pali canon is not a unit in any sense of the word, that it does not represent in unaltered form the main trunk of Buddhist tradition, and that much addition to and suppression of older material could be proved. However, the Pali canon as it is, whether it dates from the second century B.C. or from the third council in the third century B.C. or even from an earlier period, represents on the whole the earliest preserved form of Buddhist literature. Still that is no proof that it represents the main trunk of the tree. It may be only one of the main branches.

A careful critical comparison of those passages in the Pali canon which contain various doctrinal details might give some clue within Pali itself as to the division of the Pali material into literary and doctrinal strata. Such an analysis has not been made. The subjective element, however, plays a large part in such a criticism, and is especially dangerous in a religion like Buddhism, which seems to have contained from the beginning various elements held in equipoise by the delicately balanced mind of the Buddha. Franke has argued, for instance, that the *Dīgha Nikāya* is a unit, is the literary product of one mind, while Bapat has recently argued that three literary and doctrinal strata are clearly recognizable.

Still more effective would be a careful critical comparison of all the canonical texts and fragments in Sanskrit, Prakrit, Chinese, Tibetan, and the languages of Central Asia with each other and with the Pali texts. Such a comparison must be the next great goal of Buddhist studies, and might furnish us with objective rather than subjective means of analysis. The material is vast, and several difficult languages are involved. There are very few scholars at present equipped to do such critical work. Most of it may have to be done by the collaboration of specialists, but with the increased facilities now available for the study of Chinese and Tibetan it may be possible to turn the energies of some of our younger scholars into this difficult but promising field.

Discrepancies between texts may be of various kinds. Some may be of historical significance; some may not. Take for

instance a passage of the Samyutta Nikāya (v. 370) which describes the various ways of disposing of a dead body, and then continues,

But that which is called the mind, the thought, the intelligence, when it has been perfected and penetrated by faith, instruction, and good works goes to heaven,

or the Tevijja Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, which seems to sum up its teachings with a personal survival in the heaven of Brahmā. Does either of these passages resemble what is described in most books as the really essential doctrines of Buddhism? And yet I doubt if there is any real discrepancy. Our texts frequently describe Buddha as a physician who adapts his medicine to his patient. Frequent are references to Buddha's upāyakaūśalya or skill in adapting means to an end, that of conversion. The Buddhist texts are full of Socratic dialogues and arguments *ad hominem* adapted to particular situations, particular individuals, and particular points of view. The chief aim seems to have been that of producing a particular frame of mind, a definite general attitude and outlook on life which should result in the adoption of a certain course of conduct rather than in acceptance of a definite set of dogmas and of a developed system of philosophy.

Always in Buddhism from the beginning there must have been a dharma for the layman and a dharma for the monk who renounced social life. The same final goal was posited ultimately, but that does not imply that the same identical doctrines and the same identical conduct in every particular must have been prescribed for everyone in this present life. Buddhism, like Hinduism, seems to have adapted itself in many details to the capacities of various individuals and groups. There is not in each dialogue the same complete statement of doctrine. If there is any unity in them, it consists in rising above narrow doctrinal views of a cosmic nature toward an attitude of mind and a general outlook upon individual life and the world. Much of the inconsistency charged to Buddhism is due to the use of passages torn from their setting and treated as giving all the essentials of the teachings of Buddha. They are merely facets of the whole diamond. The problem,

therefore, is an extremely delicate and complicated one. Some discrepancies may not involve difference of school and difference of date.

Frequent are references to graduated discourses leading through considerations of alms-giving, good conduct, and heavens to the conception of the miseries of attachment and desire, the happiness of withdrawal and meditation, of Nirvana. The dharma of the layman led to heaven and to higher rebirths, and eventually to monkhood and final release. The dharma of the monk, which involved withdrawal from active participation in social and family life and greater practice of meditation and ecstasy, led to complete release or Nirvana in which the heavens played no part and in which the transmigrating aggregate was completely dissolved.

In all of this there was nothing esoteric in the narrow sense of the word. The teachings and the practices were freely open to all men according to their capacity to understand and practise. But it is difficult to decide just how much of the "doctrine" is original and how much was of specifically monkish development. It is possible that some of the teachings which are ascribed to Buddha himself grew up later in the settled monkish communities as monastic life became more static, speculative, and scholastic.

For myself, I would sum up the common tradition of Buddhism as follows:

(1) Transmigration.

(2) Karma, with its insistence on the all-pervading law of cause and effect, and its doctrine that a man's fate is entirely dependent upon his own acts.

(3) The retribution of acts, with the conception of heaven and hells.

(4) A way of life, with insistence on withdrawal, especially for the monk, for meditation and ecstasy. This is to bring tranquillity and peace of mind in the present life and absence of worry about the future. If all is well with a man here and now, all is sure to be well after death.

(5) The impermanence of everything except Nirvana.

There is ethics with its constant insistence on a way of life;

this is to lead to an other-worldly goal, heavens (which are transient) or Nirvana (which is the unchanging finality); a rationalistic analysis of the world and the individual into impermanent, changing elements; insistence on reason and personal experience free from theological tradition, ritual, and a sacred scripture; an agnostic attitude towards finalities and cosmological speculations to which no rational answer could be expected, towards Nirvana (which could not be defined and could be reached only by the experience of the saint). The fundamental question is that of determining just how far the rationalistic analysis was carried, at just what point the agnostic attitude began.

Later there developed among the monks:

(1) Speculation as to the nature and working of causality in general. This led over into formal logic and metaphysics.

(2) Specifically, just how does causality apply to karma and transmigration? Here we have various implications as to the meaning of anatta or anātman (non-self) and Nirvana. Has the Pali school tended to replace a more positive conception of Nirvana and of the individual, or an indefinite agnostic position by a negative interpretation? Does the word anatta merely imply that the skandhas which make up the cognizable world are not the Self, and leave open the possibility of Self (and Nirvana) as something transcendental and indefinable? Does it imply a complete and absolute denial of anything permanent in the individual and the world, and (as something transcendental) apart from and unconnected with the world?

(3) Discussion of the whole problem of knowledge. How do we know, and concerning how much is human knowledge possible? Some schools became agnostic about everything except the Buddhist way of life and an undefined Nirvana. Others extended the limits of agnosticism widely and speculated freely about all sorts of cosmological and metaphysical matters.

(4) Speculation about the Buddha. Was there in him something superhuman? This led to the wide development of mythology and worship.

It is with regard to such matters that the question of the exact relationship of the Pali school to the other schools arises,

the exact date of its divergence from the main trunk, the amount of addition and suppression after that divergence, or, in cases where the texts have not undergone change, as to how far we are under the influence of the later theology of the school in interpreting crucial and uncertain words and phrases. Often the exact point of view from which a technical term or passage is looked at makes a surprising difference in its interpretation.

Buddhism began as a small sect in Magadha. Early in the fifth century B.C. there must have been made a collection of rules of conduct and of teachings (moralizing stanzas and short discourses in prose). Buddhism gradually spread over northern India and must have developed in different groups scholastic additions, scattered stanzas and collections of stanzas, and much legendary and story material which was poured around the stanzas and rules of discipline and short discourses in order to give them a setting and put them into a more literary form. These groups may have been in contact, but with a gradual development of doctrinal and textual differences. Collections of general similarity were made, but with different accretions around the original nucleus. By the third or second century B.C. Buddhism had spread to Mathurā, Ujjain, Kashmir, and northwestern India, the seat of the school from which the Sanskrit canon comes. Here there was a great expansion of legends in order to bring the Buddha and his disciples personally into these regions and thereby gain sanctity for local stūpas and holy places. One fixation of texts into a canonical form was made in the East (in Pali), in or somewhat to the west of, Magadha by the third or second century B.C. Another fixation was made at about the same time (or at least between that time and the first Christian century), presumably in Prakrit, in northwestern India. It was this latter collection which was translated or recast into Sanskrit in the first Christian century. When did the two main traditions of Buddhism represented by the Pali and the Sanskrit canons begin to diverge? In the fourth or third or second century B.C., or even later? Do the two canons differ in any really essential points of doctrine, as

well as in form, or are such differences to be found chiefly in the Abhidhamma texts and the commentaries?

It is not justifiable, in the present stage of Buddhist studies, to neglect the non-pali literature as a whole because of the presence in it of much later texts and of a manifestly later stratum even in the oldest texts. There may be such a later stratum even in the Pali texts. Pali, in contrast to Sanskrit (especially in its prose), became crystallized into a relatively uniform language and style. In the process of transforming older texts into Pali different strata may easily have been eliminated. The appearance of uniformity in Pali may be only specious.

The next great task of Buddhist studies is that of reconstructing, so far as possible, the old Sanskrit canon. At the same time there must be a more rigorous critique of the Pali texts themselves with constant reference to all non-pali parallels. Until these two tasks have been completed, descriptions of early Buddhism are premature, and based largely on subjective elements.

NOTES

AN UNCIAL FRAGMENT OF THE GOSPELS

ON a visit to Damascus in March 1929 I found in the Musée National a fragment of the gospels, written in Greek, which has escaped the notice of those who have compiled lists of the manuscripts of the New Testament. It is mentioned neither by Gregory nor by von Soden. Its discovery has been reported to Professor von Dobschütz of Halle, and he has designated it **0196**.

The fragment consists of two parchment leaves (18.4 cm. by 13.8 cm.), and it is a palimpsest. The upper writing, in a single column of nineteen lines to the page, is uncial Greek, and the ink is brown. The lower writing was Syriac, and enough of it remains to show that it was a good Estrangelâ hand of an early date. I was unable to make out the character of the Syriac text, since only a few letters in the margin are legible. The Greek script is apparently of the ninth century.¹ Since the lower writing is Syriac, it is natural to assume that the manuscript to which **0196** belonged was written somewhere in Syria. But a Syriac codex may have been available for the making of a palimpsest in Egypt or Palestine, and hence the Greek hand may have been Egyptian or Palestinian. In any case it is safe to assign it to the Near East. The fragment contains about nineteen verses: Matthew 5, 1 *καὶ καθησαντος* (*sic*) — 5, 11 *ψευδομενοι*, and Luke 24, 26 [*ου*] *χι ταυτα* — 24, 33 *υπεστρεψαν εις*.

The collation given below is based on Scrivener's reprint (Cambridge, 1887) of Stephanus' edition of 1550.²

Matthew 5, 1 *καθησαντος*

2 *αυτου* om*

6 *πινωντες* W

9 *ηρηνοποιοι*

11 *ειπωσιν*

Luke 24, 27 *μωυσεως* BKLSXΘΠ al

διερμηνυνεν cf. AGPXΓΔΘΛ 1 33 al. mu (*-νευεν*) Vg

Syrr (sin, cur, pesh, harcl) Boh Arm

¹ For a similar hand see H. Omont, *Fac-similés des plus anciens manuscrits grecs en onciale et en minuscule de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris, 1892), Plate viii.

² Most of the citations of textual authorities are taken from Tischendorf. I am responsible for the readings of the Washington MS. (W), the Koridethi Gospels (Θ), the Old Latin codices (a b e ff²), the Vulgate, the Syriac versions (Sinaitic, Curetonian, Peshitta, and Harclean), and the Coptic translations (Bohairic and Sahidic). The readings marked with an asterisk are believed to be unique.

29 εστιν Θ

κεκληκεν GHKPΠ al. mu

ηδη \aleph BL 1 33 124 258 382 al² a b e ff² Vg Pesh Harcl
(with an obelus) Boh

η om*

εισηλθεν Θ

30 κατακληθηναι KMΘΠ* al. mu

ευλογησεν BLPXΓΔΘΔΠ unc⁸ al. pler Orig Eus

32 κεομενη

The fragment departs from the Textus Receptus in fifteen places, including six cases of itacism, and four of addition of *ν* *ἐφελκυστικόν*. Two of the variants are apparently unique readings — the omission of *αὐτοῦ* after *στόμα* in Matt. 5, 2 and the omission of *ἡ* before *ἡμέρα* in Luke 24, 29. Both of these, however, are obviously due to accident on the part of the scribe of 0196 or of some earlier copyist, and neither has any claim to be considered the right reading.

The most interesting variant is *ἡδη* in Luke 24, 29, which is otherwise attested in Greek by only three uncials (\aleph BL) and seven known minuscules (including 1 and 33). It is also found in the Vulgate, Peshitta, Harclean (with an obelus), and Bohairic versions. In no other place, however, does 0196 agree with \aleph BL against the later uncials. In other words, *ἡδη* is an exceptional reading. If the manuscript were preserved in its entirety, there might well be more instances of this sort.

By comparing the readings of the fragment with those given by Tischendorf (also W and Θ) we can find the textual character of 0196. It must, however, be remembered that the fragment contains only about nineteen verses, and that Tischendorf does not cite all the uncial authorities in every case. He records variant readings in forty-six places within the compass of the fragment, but only about eighteen or nineteen of them can safely be used for the purpose in view. Among these the fragment agrees most frequently with ΓΔΠ, and often with PXΛ. The difference in the number of agreements between these two groups arises from the fact that Matt. 5, 1-11 is not extant in PXΛ. Hence in text 0196 belongs to the group PXΓΔΔΠ.³

| ³ Thus: | Agreements in Matt. | Disagreements in Matt. | Agreements in Luke | Disagreements in Luke | Total |
|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------|
| Γ | 5 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 16 to 2 |
| Δ | 5 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 16 to 2 |
| Π | 5 | 0 | 12 | 2 | 17 to 2 |
| P | 0 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 11 to 2 |
| X | 0 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 11 to 2 |
| Λ | 0 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 11 to 2 |

Except in the case of $\eta\delta\eta$ in Luke 24, 29, already mentioned, the fragment nowhere agrees with \aleph BACDL, or with any of them, against some or all of the group $\text{P}\chi\Gamma\Delta\Delta\Pi$. On the other hand it often departs from \aleph BACDL, its disagreement with D being most striking.⁴ 0196 departs from W seven times and from Θ five times, and it never agrees with either of them against some or all of the group $\text{P}\chi\Gamma\Delta\Delta\Pi$. It may then be said that the manuscript of which 0196 once formed part was in general like $\text{P}\chi\Gamma\Delta\Delta\Pi$, and that it contained no admixture of 'Western' readings. Moreover, it may be not without significance that all these manuscripts except Γ , which is assigned to the sixth century, are ascribed to the ninth or tenth century,⁵ and that Π was found by Tischendorf at Smyrna and Γ and Δ somewhere in the East.

Gregory and von Soden include in their lists of New Testament manuscripts eleven uncial fragments said to be in the Treasure-vault (Qubbet el-Khasneh) of the celebrated Omayyad mosque in Damascus.⁶ But with a single exception they are no longer there. I inquired about them in 1929 and was told by several educated Arabs who were in a position to know the facts, that most of the manuscripts which were formerly in the Treasure-vault were taken to Germany by the Germans before they withdrew from Damascus in October 1918. What were left behind were deposited in the Musée National, where they are now safely preserved. The Conservator of the Musée and I made a careful search, and saw many fragments of manuscripts in Greek, Syriac, Armenian, Coptic, and Arabic. But we were able to find only one of the eleven fragments mentioned by Gregory and von Soden, namely 0144.⁷ The Conservator of the Musée was sure that the others had been sent to Germany.⁸

⁴ The figures stand thus:

| Disagreements with | \aleph | B | A | C | D | L |
|--------------------|----------|----|---|---|----|---|
| | 18 | 11 | 6 | 3 | 31 | 8 |

Matthew 5, 1-11 is lacking in A and L, and Luke 24, 26-33 in C.

⁵ Codex X, which consists of fragments of the gospels with commentary, is assigned by Tischendorf (*Novum Testamentum Graece*,⁸ I, p. xiii) to the end of the ninth or the tenth century, and by Gregory (*Prolegomena*, p. 31) to about the tenth century. P, Δ , A, and Π are assigned to the ninth century.

⁶ These fragments bear the following numbers in Gregory's list: 0126, 0144, 0145, 0146, 0147, 0154, 0155, 0156, 0157, 0158, and 0159.

⁷ 0144, which Gregory ascribes to the seventh century, is in part a palimpsest, with a Greek minuscule text over the uncial writing. It is also in part illegible on account of rubbing. I was able to read only a few words here and there.

⁸ I wish to express my hearty thanks to two Arab friends of Damascus who rendered me valuable assistance in different ways — to Ḥosni Effendi el-Kasm, Director of the Bibliothèque Nationale el-Zahiryeh, and to the Emir Jafr 'Abd el-Qadr, Conservator of the Musée National.

It is not at all surprising that Arabic manuscripts should have been in the great mosque of Damascus, but the question naturally arises as to how and when the others found their way thither. It is unusual to meet with a Coptic manuscript in the East outside of Egypt. Moreover, why should Christian documents have been kept in the Treasure-vault of the Omayyad mosque? All these manuscripts except the Arabic ones must have belonged at some time to the monasteries or churches of the Near East. When the Arabs conquered Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, and established their authority in these countries, the monastic and ecclesiastical libraries of the regions naturally came under their control. Many books must have perished in this troubled epoch, but some escaped destruction and were brought by the Arabs to Damascus and deposited in the principal mosque of the city. We have no means of knowing when or under what circumstances this occurred. Ever since Syria became a Moslem country Damascus has been an important centre of Islamic influence and culture, and the fragments of manuscripts may have been brought to the mosque at any time after the Arab conquest. Christianity was regarded by the Moslems as a divinely revealed religion, and they would not ordinarily have felt impelled to destroy copies of the Christian Scriptures. The Arabs were in fact much less fanatical and harsh in the treatment of their Christian subjects than is sometimes supposed, and they did not aim at a wholesale conversion of the Christians.⁹ The Qur'ân expressly distinguishes Jews and Christians from the unbelieving, heathen Arabs; and the Prophet declares that whosoever believes in God and the last day and does what is right, shall neither fear nor grieve.¹⁰ Christians and Jews were permitted to observe their own customs and to practise their own rites.

⁹ G. F. Moore, *History of Religions*, II, pp. 408 ff.

¹⁰ Qur'ân, sûrah v. 73.

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TWO NOTES ON IGNATIUS AND JUSTIN MARTYR

I

Ignatius, Magnes. 1: Γνοὺς ὑμῶν τὸ πολυεύτακτον τῆς κατὰ θεὸν ἀγάπης ἀγαλλιώμενος προειλόμην ἐν πίστει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ προσλαλῆσαι ὑμῖν.

So Ignatius begins his letter to the Magnesian Christians:

When I learned [from the deputation of your church] with what admirable discipline your godly love [i.e. your love as Christians determined by the standards of God, κατὰ θεόν as in Paul's Rom. 8, 27 and 2 Cor. 7, 9, 10] is ordered, I resolved in my joy to send you a letter [προσλαλεῖν as in Ign., Ephes. 3] upon faith in Jesus Christ.

The Magnesian Christians were evidently on the whole free from a divisive spirit which would have broken up the loving unity of the church; Ignatius had little concern over their relations to the bishop and the ecclesiastical authorities. But his delight in their love prompts him to address them on the subject of the Christian faith, which is vital to Christian love.

Such is the purport of this opening sentence. The above rendering assumes that, since ἀγαλλιώμενος goes with προειλόμην, it is more natural to take ἐν πίστει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ with the following words instead of with προειλόμην ('having learned of your love, I resolved it should be on the matter of faith that I address you'), faith being the larger and more fundamental aspect of the Christian religion. The letter thus begins as it ends:

Farewell. Yours be that godly concord, yours that undivided spirit, which is Jesus Christ (ch. 15).

The godly concord, or mutual love determined and inspired by God, is bound up with a true belief in Jesus Christ, and it is to the latter that Ignatius devotes himself in his letter to the church.

Most English versions¹ render ἐν here literally; 'I resolved to address you in the faith of Jesus Christ,' that is, 'in the sphere of faith,' as though Ignatius meant that he was about to write a religious and Christian letter to the local church. This is also the normal German rendering: 'im Glauben Jesu Christi.' That Ignatius may have meant this is possible, but there is more point to his words if we take

¹ Even the idiomatic French version by Lelong, in Hemmer et Lejay's *Textes et Documents* (1910, vol. III, p. 29) fails to bring out the full force of ἐν, though it avoids the conventional rendering: 'Ai-je résolu de vous adresser quelques paroles inspirées par la foi en Jésus-Christ.'

them to mean, 'I resolved to send you a letter upon faith in Jesus Christ,' this faith being the subject of the letter. Such is the sense of *ἐν* in a similar connection lower down; in chap. 11 Ignatius warns them "not to slip into the snares of vain doctrine but to be convinced of the Birth and Passion and Resurrection (*ἀλλὰ πεπληροφορηῆσθαι ἐν τῇ γεννήσει καὶ τῷ πάθει καὶ τῇ ἀναστάσει κτλ.*)."² In Ephes. 20 the same usage seems to occur: "In the second tract which I mean to write to you I shall go on to expound (*προσδηλώσω*) what I have just begun, this divine purpose regarding the new man, Jesus Christ, dealing with (*ἐν*) faith in him," etc., if the *ἐν* here goes with *προσδηλώσω*. This use of *ἐν* as almost an equivalent for *περί*, 'in the matter of,'³ suits ch. 3 and ch. 1 so admirably that in view of its necessity in the former passage it may be taken without much hesitation to explain the latter. "The faith of Jesus Christ"⁴ is the Christian religion, or, as Ignatius elsewhere calls it, "the faith of God for which Jesus Christ was crucified" (Ephes. 16), or "the faith which is through him" (Philad. 8), that is, the religious faith in God which he evokes. Further down in the present letter (ch. 9) he reminds the Magnesians that they owe their faith to the revelation of Jesus Christ (*δι' οὗ μυστηρίου ἐλάβομεν τὸ πιστεῖν*), and specific references to belief occur in chs. 5, 6, and 10, with unwonted emphasis.

The meaning of *ἐν πίστει κτλ.* may certainly be no more than 'as a Christian speaking to Christians' (Lightfoot), or, better still, in Funk's paraphrase, 'animo fide Christiana pleno.' There is no similar phrase in Ignatius which throws light on the passage, for *προσλαλεῖν* is not used elsewhere in this exact connection; neither is *ἐν πίστει*. But belief in Jesus Christ is the theme of the letter. Indeed he proceeds to assure the Magnesians at once that his constant prayer for the churches is "that they may be united to the flesh and spirit of Jesus Christ, our unending Life, united both in faith and in love (than which there is nought finer), and united — what is still more vital — to Jesus and the Father; for by his aid (*ἐν ᾧ*, i.e. by the aid of Jesus), if we endure successfully all the onsets of the prince of this world, we shall attain to God." It is what is involved in this faith that Ignatius

² Another instance occurs in Philad. inscript., "fully convinced of his resurrection" (*ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει αὐτοῦ πεπληροφορημένη*).

³ Ignatius almost invariably uses *περί* of persons. It is only in his letter to Polycarp (ch. 2, *περί ἧς*) that it denotes the object of conviction, except for a passage like Smyrn. 6 (*περί ἀγάπης οὐ μέλει αὐτοῖς*), and even there *ἀγάπη* is explained by a series of personal nouns.

⁴ Even in Ephes. 20 (*ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ πίστει*) it is faith in Christ, not the faith of Christ (subjective), that Ignatius describes.

discusses in the letter, especially belief in the real humanity of the divine Christ and a fellowship with him which requires no supplement from Judaism. In no other letter does he strike the keynote so sharply at the beginning, and this seems to justify us in assigning the meaning defended above to the words *ἐν πίστει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*: 'I have joyfully (or, gladly) resolved to address you on the matter of faith in Jesus Christ.' Unless we are prepared to take *ἐν πίστει* κτλ. with *ἀγαλλιώμενος*, which is forced, or closely with *προειλόμην*,⁵ which is feeble, it does appear probable that the phrase should be taken with *προσλαλήσαι ὑμῖν* and in the sense just suggested.

II

In the *Apology* i. 62–63, Justin Martyr is arguing, as he does elsewhere,⁶ that the divine appearance and revelation to Moses at the burning bush was a pre-Christian manifestation of the Logos Christ. In the story of Exodus 3, 1–10, he points out, it was "our Christ (*ὁ ἡμέτερος Χριστός*) who conversed with him *ἐν ιδέα* πρὸς ἐκ βάτου . . . and he received mighty power from Christ, who spoke to him *ἐν ιδέα* πρὸς" (62). Such is Justin's exegesis of the passage. He then (63) proceeds to controvert the Jewish exegesis, with which Roman readers were probably familiar. The Jews held that it was 'the ineffable God' (*τὸν ἀγνώμαστον θεόν*) who spoke to Moses. But to Justin this is another proof that the Jews did not understand the nature of God, as indeed the prophetic Spirit had announced in Isaiah 1, 3: "Israel has not known me, my people has not understood me." Similarly, "Jesus Christ also convicts the Jews of not knowing either the Father or the Son, saying, No one knows the Father except the Son, and no one knows the Son except the Father and those to whom the Son reveals him." The Son, Justin proceeds, is called not only the Logos but *ἄγγελος* and *ἀπόστολος*, for as *ἄγγελος* he announces (*ἀπαγγέλλει*) all that has to be known of God,⁷ and as *ἀπόστολος* he is sent (*ἀποστέλλεται*) to proclaim all that is announced. This is why it is said in Exodus that "the angel of God spoke to Moses in the flame of fire." But, Justin continues, in spite of this the Jews will assert that it was the Father

⁵ Like 'Delafosse' recently in his *Lettres d'Ignace d'Antioche* (p. 104): "Je me suis décidé dans la foi de Jésus-Christ à m'entretenir avec vous."

⁶ *Dial.* 59, 60, where the discussion is in its proper place. In the *Apology* it is an aside, suggested by the mention of Moses at the bush; Justin is really discussing baptism as part of the Christian ritual of worship, and he resumes this in ch. 64, after his digression on the part played by the Logos Christ at the bush.

⁷ Elsewhere, as in *Dial.* 58 and 60, 'angel' is used with reference to the relation of service (*ὑπηρετοῦντα τῷ τῶν ὄλων πατρί*).

and Maker of the universe (*τῶν ὅλων πατέρα καὶ δημιουργόν*) who spoke at the bush, though we know it was "Jesus Christ the Son of God and his apostle, *πρότερον λόγος ὢν* and appearing, now under the form of fire, now *ἐν εἰκόνι ἁσωμάτων*, but finally in the present, by the will of God, made man for the sake of humanity." When Jews, to the contrary, persist in identifying the speaker at the bush with God, they simply prove the correctness of Isaiah 1, 3 and Matthew 11, 27, the latter saying⁸ having been spoken by Jesus *παρ' αὐτοῖς ὢν*. Justin concludes: "The Jews then, who always imagine that it was the Father of the universe who spoke to Moses (whereas he who spoke to him was the Son of God, also called angel and apostle), are fairly convicted by the prophetic Spirit and also by Christ himself of knowing neither the Father nor the Son; *οἱ γὰρ τὸν υἱὸν πατέρα φάσκοντες εἶναι ἐλέγχονται μήτε τὸν πατέρα ἐπιστάμενοι μήθ' ὅτι ἐστὶν υἱὸς τῷ πατρὶ τῶν ὅλων γινώσκοντες.*"

To whom do the words just cited in Greek refer? Not to another party in the contemporary religious life of the church but to the Jews themselves. When we examine the context we find that Justin is continuing his criticism of the Jews, who know neither the Father nor the Son, as he has been saying, and betray their ignorance by ascribing the divine word at the bush to the Father instead of to the Son. There is no hint that Justin is travelling beyond this range of thought. The sense of the words might even be indicated by changing *οἱ φάσκοντες* to an infinitive: 'for to call the Son the Father is to convict oneself of knowing neither the Father nor the fact that the Father of the universe has a Son.' Indeed I observe that this idiomatic translation is followed by Louis Pautigny in his excellent French edition ('appeler le Fils Père,' etc.);⁹ it is a good way of bringing out clearly that Justin in these closing words is still describing the Jews from the standpoint of the Christian exegete. The apologist's point is that the sharp words of Matthew 11, 27 were spoken to Jews and about Jews, because the Jews did not know either the Father or the Son (*ὅτι οὐκ ἔγνωσαν Ἰουδαῖοι τί πατήρ καὶ τί υἱός*), their mistaken exegesis of the Exodus story being proof positive of this ignorance and confusion. What the Son did and said in the Old Testament record they attributed to the supreme Deity; in other words, such as a Christian would naturally employ, they were thereby alleging that the Son was the Father. Such is the conclusion at which Justin arrives, and in

⁸ Whether Justin had also in mind some Johannine passage does not concern us here; neither does the form of his citation of Matthew.

⁹ Justin, *Apologies* (1904), in Hemmer et Lejay's *Textes et Documents*.

the sentence in question he is insisting that this idea of the Jews is equivalent to ignorance of the nature of God altogether. For the Deity is more than the Father of the universe: he is the Father of the Son, who spoke and acted for Him at the bush and elsewhere.

This interpretation of the passage seems more natural and apt than to regard the sentence as an abrupt allusion to some group of Christians within the church who are supposed to have anticipated the modalistic view that the Father and the Son are one and the same. Such an interpretation, however, of *οἱ φάσκοντες* is still current. Thus Dom Chapman,¹⁰ referring to this passage and to Dial. 128, observes, "Already St. Justin knows of Christians who taught the identity of the Father and the Son," and McGiffert repeats this in "The God of the Early Christians" (p. 79). But the context is against any such view of the words. It is fair to assume that the trend of the whole paragraph is in the direction of an anti-jewish argument. Justin may have known of such Christians, but there is no evidence that he has them in mind here. It is characteristic of Jews to assert that the Son is the Father, that is, in the particular case under discussion, to allege that the speaker at the bush was the Father of the universe and not his Son; this runs through Justin's contention from first to last.¹¹ "Even nowadays all the Jews teach that it was the ineffable God Who spoke to Moses. . . . So Jesus Christ likewise convicts the Jews of not knowing either the Father or the Son, when he says, No one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son reveals him. . . . Since the insensate Jews say that it was the Father and Maker of the universe who spoke thus [i.e. in Exodus 3, 2 f.], Jesus when among them . . . said, No one knows the Father except the Son, and no one knows the Son except the Father and those to whom the Son reveals him." What follows is in the wake of this, and must be taken as a sequel, not as including a sudden allusion to some circle inside the Christian church. In the light of the context, grammatically and logically considered, the words in question are not a general statement about some party hitherto unmentioned, but rather a continuation of what has been urged in the preceding sentences; they refer to the Jews and to the Jews alone, in connection with their inability to

¹⁰ The Catholic Encyclopaedia, X, 450.

¹¹ In Dial. 60 he argues against the Jew that "no one with the least sense will dare to say that the Maker and Father of the universe left the entire region above heaven and made his appearance on a tiny spot of earth." This is not brought forward in the passage of the Apology. But there is not any indication that Justin is controverting simultaneously a christological error.

recognise the divine Logos as set forth by the Spirit of prophecy even before Christ became incarnate.

In Dial. 128, Justin, after repeating his argument on the Old Testament appearances of the Logos Christ, tells the Jews that he does so because "certain persons, desiring to anticipate it [i.e. the Christian explanation] allege that the Power issuing from the Father of the universe and appearing to Moses, Abraham, and Jacob, was called 'angel' in his approach to men, since thereby the things of the Father are announced (*ἀγγέλλεται*) to men . . . and 'logos,' since he bears to men the communications of the Father; but they hold that this Power cannot be divided or separated from the Father, any more than the light of the sun on earth can be divided or separated from the sun in heaven. . . . When the Father chooses, he can cause his Power to go forth from him, and when he chooses he can again draw it back. In the same way, they declare, he also makes the angels." The coloring of this passage is Jewish and Philonic. It is barely possible that Justin has in mind some Christians, but a critical estimate would not venture to go beyond G. Archambault's cautious admission that "il n'est pas impossible que des juifs ou d'anciens prosélytes, nouvellement convertis, aient conservé sur le Logos comme sur les Anges des idées à tendances anti-hypostatiques qui s'épanouiront plus tard dans le Modalisme ou le Monarchianisme,"¹² and even this is not a necessary inference from the passage. Justin is dealing with Jews, and the probability is that he is adducing and reproducing in his own way what he knows to be a pre-Christian (*πρόλογον*) Jewish opinion. The verdict of older scholars,¹³ reiterated by Harnack,¹⁴ seems to hold good. But in any case this passage ought not to be regarded as determining the meaning of the sentence in Apol. 63.

The passage therefore should be rendered as follows: I put the words under discussion in italics and add the further sentences which round off Justin's argument, in order to show how it is the Jews who occupy his mind.

The Jews then who always imagine that it was the Father of the universe who spoke to Moses (whereas he who spoke to him was the Son of God, also called angel and apostle) are fairly convicted by the prophetic Spirit and by Christ himself of knowing neither the Father nor the Son; for to *allege that the Son is the Father* [i.e. as the Jews do, in their interpretation of Exod. 3, 2 f.,

¹² Justin: Dialogue avec Tryphon, II, p. 258.

¹³ See Engelhardt, Das Christenthum Justins des Märtyrers (1878), p. 281.

¹⁴ Dogmengeschichte (4th edition), I, 217: "Man braucht nicht nothwendig an solche Controversen innerhalb der Gemeinden zu denken; es können jüdische Vorstellungen gemeint sein, und das ist nach Apol. i. 63 das wahrscheinlichere."

by identifying the speaker with the Father instead of with the Son] *is to be convicted of knowing neither the Father nor the fact that the Father of the universe has a Son who is the Logos, the firstborn of the Deity and himself divine* [πρωτότοκος ὢν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ θεὸς ὑπάρχει]. In former days he appeared in the form of fire and in incorporeal likeness to Moses and the other prophets, but now in the days of your [i.e. the Roman] empire, as I have already said, he became man, born of a virgin, according to the will of the Father for the salvation of those who believe in him, and he endured to be set at nought and to suffer, that by dying and rising he might overcome death. The word from the bush spoken to Moses, I am that I am, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, and the God of thy fathers, signifies that these persons are alive after death, and that they are men who belong to this very Christ; indeed they were the first of all men to busy themselves in the quest for God, Abraham being the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob — as Moses has recorded.

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